

ZILLAH;
A TALE OF
THE HOLY CITY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"BRAMBLETYE HOUSE," "THE TOR HILL,"
"REUBEN APSLEY," &c.

"From thee and thy innocent beauty first came
The revealings that taught him true love to adore,
To feel the bright presence, and turn him with shame
From the idols he darkly had knelt to before."

T. MOORE.

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ZILLAH.

CHAPTER I.

IF we have no previous regard for those to whom we have rendered any essential service, our desire to stand justified in our own eyes for the benefit we have conferred, seldom fails to attach us to them afterwards. Self-love gives an unconscious bias to the affections ; we are anxious that the judgment should ratify what the heart had suggested, and even where the obligation originated in a momentary impulse, and was bestowed upon an utter stranger, an

involuntary predilection disposes us to believe that he was singularly worthy of our good offices. In what proportion these various and yet converging feelings were mingled together in the mind of Zillah, we shall not stop to inquire; but as the appearance of the young Roman had in the first instance deeply interested her, so the recollection of the horrible fate from which she had snatched him tended to inspire her with a warmer and more profound regard. The tender, respectful, and yet impassioned tone in which he had poured forth his gratitude, as they were walking home together from the theatre, strengthened her prepossession in favour of the stranger, whose promised visit on the following morning was expected with an anxious beating of the heart, which she had never before experienced.

“What ponderous, old-fashioned vehicle is this, with its four war-horses abreast?” exclaimed Gabriel, who was gazing from the

window. Zillah looked out, and beheld a rumbling, antique, waggonlike coach, the cumbersome wheels being a solid circle of timber with a tire of brass, decorated with military emblems and trophies, which were considerably the worse for wear, and driven apparently by a soldier, for he had the shaggy cap of the light infantry, in imitation of a tiger's head, of which the skin hung down over his shoulders. Two mounted lancers followed the equipage. Just as they approached the Sagan's door, one of the horses proved restive, and while the coachman was in vain endeavouring to soothe and quiet it, a large, masculine-looking woman jumped from the carriage, snatched a lance from one of her attendants, seized the refractory animal by the bridle, struck him sharply over the head with the butt-end of the weapon, and with the assistance of a few abusive terms, delivered in no very gentle voice, soon reduced him to submission. "Ride home, sirrah!" she ex-

claimed to one of the servants, tossing him back his lance ; “ take the General’s Sagum and his scarlet mantle to the Prætorium, and tell him I will join him there, as soon as the ~~re~~ is over. Deliver this letter, as you ~~want~~, to the Captain of the tenth cohort of the Gallic Legion, stationed at the Salarian Gate ; and bring with you the rod of the Centurion whom the General has ordered to be degraded :—away !” The man, who had dismounted to receive these orders, put his foot on a small projection of his lance, the only stirrup known to the Roman cavalry, vaulted on his horse, and rode off.

“ And you, Davus ; do you hear me, sirrah ?” she continued, addressing the second attendant : “ go to the wharf opposite the Tiberine Island, and desire them not to embark any of the battering engines belonging to the Celtic Legion till I have inspected them ; and when the detachment of our Legion has returned to

its barracks, desire the trumpeters and the eagle-bearers to come up instantly to the General's-quarters. Tighten your surcingle, sirrah, or you will lose your housings. That will do ; begone ! Coachman, wait till I return."

While she had been giving her orders, Zillah had observed that the bodice of this large, coarse-looking, Roman Thalestris, was shaped so as to resemble a cuirass, and her head-dress arranged in the form of a military casque ; but her surprise at the strangeness of her manner and appearance was converted into astonishment when she entered the house, and was announced as a visitant to herself, by the name of Marcia Claudia. With a blunt but somewhat coarse cordiality she embraced Zillah ; introduced herself as the aunt of Felix Fabricius, the youth whose life she had so critically saved at the theatre ; expressed the greatest admiration of the courage and self-possession which had snatched him from so disreputable

a death ; and added, that she called, at the express request of her nephew, although there was a review, from which she hardly ever absented herself, to state that his military duties compelled his attendance for a few hours in the Campus Martius, but that the moment he was dismissed he would hasten to pay his promised visit to his courageous preserver.

“Felix is a good soldier,” she continued—“and, indeed, so he ought to be ; for my husband, the General Sosius, and myself, have had the charge of his education since he was left an orphan boy ; we have brought him up in the style of the old Romans, fitted him for war and the camp ; and young as he is, and gentle as are his manners, he has already won a mural crown, having been the first to leap over the enemy’s rampart in storming a fortress. He is, in fact, too prodigal of his own life, too sparing of others ; willing at any time to sacrifice himself if he can save his men ; which is

perhaps his only fault as an officer. He once spared a prostrate Gaul whom he had beaten down, and had no sooner turned away, than the villain stabbed him in the back—the only ignominious wound he has ever received."

Zillah declared that she considered it an honour rather than a disgrace, adding, that humanity and true courage were always found in conjunction.

" Fudge ! Bombax ! don't tell me of humanity towards barbarians ! I should myself feel no more compunction at cutting their throats than at sticking a knife into a melon. With all his faults, however, I love my nephew ; so does every body indeed ; and though I should be soon reconciled to his loss were he to perish in battle, to die standing, as a soldier ought to do, I should have been truly mortified had he been seized by such an ignoble assailant as an elephant, and trampled to pieces in the arena, like a vile gladiator."

“ It rejoices me to think that I was the fortunate means of preserving him from such a fate.”

“ Poor Felix ! he hardly deserves his name, for though he has every thing in the world to make him happy, youth, rank, fame, illustrious descent, and a large fortune, which we nursed for him during his minority, he is ever moping and melancholy when not engaged in his military duties ; and poring over dull books, or staring at statues and paintings. This is foolish ; for I am of the same opinion with honest old Cato—I hate the arts, despise philosophy and the Muses, and hold war to be the only fitting profession or occupation of the Romans. My nephew is quite a young stoic, and denies himself all the pleasures congenial to his age. I could almost wish he were more of an Epicurean ; for he is so strict in his sobriety, and so insensible, apparently, to the influence of love, that his waggish companions have given

him Virgil's nickname, and always call him Parthenias. Ha ! ha !”

“ A purity of manners so noble and unusual, particularly in a young soldier, must be surely a subject of pride rather than of regret.” *

“ Fudge ! Bombax ! he would be all the better for a little wildness ; it is the want of it that makes him so melancholy. My husband Sosius was gay enough in his younger days, but he had a triumph decreed to him before he was thirty years of age. Love and war, Venus and Mars, generally form a partnership together, at least in the heyday of the blood. I am the General’s Venus now. Ha ! ha ! I have made five campaigns with him already, and am again about to accompany him into Syria, for I am of a family as warlike as his own. It can boast six triumphs, and has supplied thirty consuls, besides other magistrates to the State. Did you observe the carriage I came in ? It was built by my grandfather, Caius Marius, above sixty years

ago, when he triumphed for his defeat of the Teutones at Aquæ Sextiæ. They built differently in those days ; there is good solid timber in it ; and it will still outlast a hundred of these gaudy, butterfly, gimcrack vehicles that one sees flaunting about the Forum and the Campus Martius. Two or three of them ran against us yesterday, as we were going to the theatre, but they were smashed and shivered, like painted bubbles against a wall, and the General and I had a hearty laugh as we lolled in our solid old wooden bulwark. By the by, what induced you to quit the theatre just at the commencement of the sports?"

" I was so much agitated and alarmed, that no earthly consideration could have forced me to remain a minute longer."

" Fudge ! Bombax ! so bold in assaulting the elephant, and yet pretend to be such a coward ! Perhaps, however, you take no interest in any thing but the gladiators. You're

right, you're right; 'tis the only sport in which a woman of spirit will find any delight. It is quite a passion with me. I have ridden a hundred miles before now to be present at one. There's a female club of us here, who always sit together in the theatres, and I am their* president, or directress. They call us the Ladies of the Thumb; and as I am known to be such a good judge of these matters, the whole house will sometimes look to me for the fate of a combatant: but, by Hercules! they find me a stern judge, for the spectators expect blood, and, poor fellows! it would be cruel to disappoint them. There was a gladiator last week—to be sure, he had fought well, and was desperately wounded, and had lowered his sword in token of submission, but what of that?—he had the meanness to look up at me, as he lay bleeding on the ground, with an appealing eye, as if to ask for his life. I saw what the fellow meant, but I have no notion of encouraging

such sneaking ; so I held up my thumb, his throat was cut in a twinkling, a hook was fastened to his body, they dragged him out through the Libitinarian Gate,—and so much for appealing to Marcia Claudia ! Ha ! ha !”

Suiting the action to the word, she held up her great, coarse, masculine thumb ; and as Zillah reflected that it had been the signal of doom and death to many a brave man, she could not repress a shudder of disgust, and an exclamation of—“ Horrible !”

“ What do you mean by horrible ? fudge ! Bombax ! Is it not their business to die handsomely for our amusement ? Are there not six basket-men kept and paid for sprinkling yellow sand where a gladiator has been killed ; and would you have them walk up and down without any thing to do ?—Well, I must go, or I shall be too late to see the soldiers dismissed. It is the first time I have been absent from a review since I broke my leg. We

shall be happy to see you and your friends in the street Janus, next door to the Temple."

Repeating her thanks, and offering her services and those of the General with a vulgar heartiness, which, however, had every appearance of being sincere, she stalked out of the room; remounted her ponderous vehicle; flopped her heavy weight down in the seat with a swag that would have dislocated the bones of an ordinary carriage, or have thrown it into convulsions, but which her old, well-timbered waggon only recognized with a sullen creak, and then rumbled heavily away.

The little sketch she had given of her nephew's character, and which had served to exalt him, even before she knew him, in Zillah's estimation, was correct, but not complete. His uncle, the rough old General Sosius, and his aunt Marcia, of whom the reader has just had a glimpse, casting his young and pliable faculties into the military mould, had taught him from

his infancy upwards, that the advancement of Roman grandeur, and the achievement of martial fame, were the first and noblest objects of human ambition ; and long usage had so far engrafted a second nature upon him, that he entered with alacrity upon the career pointed out for his pursuit, and, instigated by the emulation of a brave spirit, soon eclipsed all his youthful competitors in deeds of arms. But these exploits were the produce of tuition and excitement, not the suggestions of his proper heart, whose unperverted tendencies, little in unison with the warlike habits of the world as it then existed, would have guided him into no other paths than those of peace and gentleness. The bough in which the ring-dove built its nest, while men and cattle were protected beneath its kindly foliage, when fashioned into a lance, pointed with iron, and tilting at men's throats, is not wrested more from its original and natural purposes, than was the gentle and the

generous Felix, when perverted into a soldier, and familiarized with scenes of slaughter. In this uncongenial capacity, his innate propensities still found an occasional vent in those acts of tenderness and humanity which his aunt had so pointedly condemned, but which neither the ridicule, nor the more remorseless example of his comrades, could induce him to forego. These were the only sweet and grateful traits, the sole redeeming charities that reconciled him to a profession, of which he rigidly discharged the duties, from a sense of fervent patriotism, as well as from the force of early habit, and a profound feeling of what was due to the honour of his illustrious family ; although, as he advanced to manhood and the full power of reflection, he felt that it was little in accordance with the convictions of his reason, or the secret impulses of his heart.

These impressions constituted one, but not the principal source of the melancholy which

Marcia had regretted. Tempted as he was by the parasites and profligates that ever ~~wandered~~ around a young man of fortune, and susceptible by nature of every loving influence, his brave, pure heart, disdained to be contaminated by vulgar sensuality, scorned to wallow in the debasement of venal voluptuousness. It was a triumph that cost him nothing, for when he practised virtue he only gratified his own desires; but he sometimes found it difficult to bear the ridicule of his less scrupulous companions, and though he remained unseduced by their example, their raillery would often tend to confirm the depression of his spirits.

But his sentiments upon the subject of religion had exercised the most pointed influence in producing that seriousness, not to say melancholy, by which his character was marked. Like most of the reflecting and better educated Pagans, he had cast off all belief in the monstrous fables of polytheism; but he could not

be content, like them, to leave the void unsupplied, to grovel on in a blank uninquiring obscurity, and a total absence of all faith, or to repose upon the doctrine of a blind, self-producing necessity. "Had I been born to-day, with my form and faculties as perfect as they now are," he once exclaimed to a young Epicurian, with whom he was arguing,—"had I found myself suddenly snatched from unconscious darkness, placed in a magnificent and gloriously illuminated palace, supplied with a regular succession of banquets, surrounded with sentient beings like myself, and every thing by its admirable order, contrivance, and succession, incontestably proving the existence of some all-powerful, though unseen, architect and superintending governor, could I behold such wonders, undergo such an astounding change, and not wish to know who built the glorious structure, who supplied and regulated it, why I was placed within its beautiful and pleasant pre-

cincts, and whither I was to go when I left them? And because I was introduced into this gorgeous pageant of the world, when my reason was undeveloped, and ~~have~~ grown up amid its splendours, shall I not ask the same questions when my matured faculties are perpetually tormented with their inability to solve the mysteries that surround and bewilder them? You tell me to eat, drink, and be merry, after the fashion of the Epicureans; to enjoy the luxuries of the palace provided for me, without asking whence they come, or who provided them; and not to perplex myself with vain researches into inscrutable enigmas. This I cannot do. I cannot walk across the stage of existence, like a dumb performer in some theatrical procession, enter at the door of life, and disappear at that of death, without seeking to know why I make up a part of the pomp; who ordained the stately show in which I am a par-

ticipator ; whither I am to go when I am dismissed from it."

~~Some~~ were the doubts and unsatisfied longings that ~~haunted~~ and afflicted the mind of Felix. His heart, as yet unvisited by the ennobling passion of love, and finding no vent for its sympathies, fed upon its own melancholy ; while his depressed soul, like an unsupported vine, yearned for something around which it might entwine, and follow its natural impulses by climbing up towards heaven.

Zillah, as we have already stated, was awaiting his appearance with an interest rather increased than diminished by Marcia's description of his character, when she heard the arrival of a visitant, and experienced an unusual flutter as the footsteps approached her door. Shall we confess that she felt some disappointment, when, instead of the expected stranger, Maia tripped into the apartment, and began to scold her, in her

usual mood of playful petulance, for running away from the theatre. "Oh, my dear ! ~~she~~ exclaimed, "you have no idea what ~~such~~ intense loss you had ! Only think ! that stupid cowardly rhinoceros, after being twice knocked down, grew desperate at last, ran at the elephant, and fairly ripped him up with his sharp horn. Such a shout when the great monster fell ! And then we had a grand engagement of wild beasts of all sorts fighting together—such roaring and ravening—such numbers of dead bodies lying in the arena at the same time !—Oh ! it was a sweet combat—quite a love of a slaughter ! I would not have missed it for all the silver in the treasury ; I must run away, though, or I shall not see a morsel of the review. By the by, haven't you had a visit from old Bombax, as every body calls her ? I met her tumbril just now, shaking the solid earth as it rumbled along. Isn't she ridiculous ? She will be too late for the review ; and so shall I, if I stand gossiping

here : that provoking Octavia detained me so long ~~to~~ morning ! At what time shall I call upon ~~you~~ to-morrow ? Before noon, you know, the ~~sparks~~ ~~will~~ be all crowded into the porticoes, the **Fofum**, or the courts of law, talking nonsense, or politics, which is the same thing, or listening to the noisy spouting of the pleaders."

" Let us fix for twelve o'clock, then," said Zillah.

" Ridiculous, my dear. It is the general dinner-hour, after which the men all take their mid-day sleep. There will not be a decent creature in the streets till one or two o'clock : at which time, if it suits you, we will go to the Tennis-court, to see little Octavius have a bout with his friends **Mæcenas**, **Varius**, and **Galba** ; look in at the **Campus Martius**, where we shall be sure to find some of the young fashionables at their daily sports ; call at the **Circus** in time for the chariot-races ; and then lounge about among the genteel mob in the porticoes

and promenades till three, when the bells will sound for the opening of the public ~~beachs~~, and all the world will hasten to throw ~~themselves~~ into the water. Oh, la ! I forgot to tell you that the Colonel joined me, after all, at the theatre, and declared that he only stopped with the ladies in yellow for a single minute, just to reclaim his nosegay, which one of them had snatched away. Wasn't it ridiculous ! Farewell ! farewell ! expect me at one to-morrow."

Soon after her departure, Felix at length made his appearance, wearing his military accoutrements, heated with the exertions of the review, and undivested of the dust which the numerous troops had raised in the Campus Martius. As he approached, he caught a glimpse of himself in a mirror, and stopping short, apologized with some confusion for presenting himself in such an unseemly state, declaring, that in his impatience to see his preserver, he had hastened from the review the moment he was dismissed,

without bestowing a single thought upon his heated flight, and the dusty state of his equipments. As the offence itself, originating in an anxiety to rush into her presence, was rather flattering than otherwise, Zillah not only thought it required no apology, but was inclined to believe that her visitant, flushed and somewhat agitated as he was, appeared to more advantage than if he had stopped upon his passage to spruce himself at the toilet. That paleness which she had observed the day before, was no longer discernible; and the melancholy which had imparted so marked an expression to his physiognomy, seemed to be succeeded by an animation and lively interest whenever he spoke to Zillah, but more particularly when he listened to her voice. This he was ever eager to do, hanging upon her accents with a rapt and keen attention, as if afraid of losing a single syllable. Fervent, impassioned as he was in pouring forth the effusions of his gra-

titude, he paused instantly if she betrayed the smallest disposition to speak, deeming his own thoughts and feelings utterly unimportant when compared with a single wish or word that might fall from the lips of Zillah. There was an appealing reverence in his looks, a tenderness in his gentle voice, a respectful and yet admiring homage in his demeanour, that testified, more than could have been effected by the most glowing eloquence, the profound impression made upon his heart, not so much by the service rendered, vital as it was, as by the charms and graces of his fair preserver. This modest suavity of deportment, so unusual in a young and distinguished soldier, conferred a higher attraction upon the noble and generous sentiments he professed, while it exalted the quality of his clear and enlarged intellect ; so that when they parted, after a long, protracted, and mutually delightful colloquy, it might have been difficult to decide whether Zillah or Felix were the

most surprised and captivated by the interview. “What a pity,” whispered the former to herself, “that a man so amiable, so noble, so intelligent, should be a Pagan!”

“Amazing that so stately, so enlightened, so divine a creature, should be a barbarian!” exclaimed Felix as he left the house, penetrated with a love and admiration which, defying the phrase upon his lips, paused not to enquire into the name or nation of the fascinating object that had excited them.

“He would have been infinitely too good a prey for the elephant,” observed Gabriel; “I have not encountered a more amiable or intelligent young man since we left Palestine, and I am the more surprised therefore that he should wear so pale a sardonyx in his ring.”

“I have seen many a dog,” said the Sagan, “better taught than its fellows, and even pleasant and ingratiating in its manners, but it was a dog after all. And thus, when we admire the

appearance and deportment of the youth who has just left us, it becomes us, as Hebrews, to recollect that he is one of the outcasts of God, a blind benighted Pagan."

Zillah sighed, and their conversation was soon afterwards interrupted by the entrance of Mark Antony. Although his visit professed to be intended for the ambassadors, his looks and manner sufficiently betrayed that Zillah had been his chief attraction. After applauding her courage at the theatre, regretting her early departure, and expressing a hope that she had recovered from any agitation that might have been occasioned by the event, he took from beneath his scarlet mantle, for he was attired in a splendid uniform, a little packet, and addressing Zillah, exclaimed, " When you put forth your beautiful arm yesterday, and so critically saved the life of the grave young stoic, Parthenias as we call him, I forget his proper name, I observed that you wore no bracelets ; and as Venus herself disdained not the aid of

ornament, you must allow me to place these baubles, I brought them with me from Asia, around your wrists." While he was taking them from the parcel, Zillah looked enquiringly at her father, who signified by a nod that she might accept the present; but Antony, without awaiting permission either from her or from the Sagan, clasped one of them on, and holding her hand, under pretence of observing the effect of the trinket, squeezed and kept it prisoner for some time, spite of her endeavours to withdraw it. The other underwent a similar seizure and compression, his ravenous eyes devouring her all the time with an expression that filled her with mingled confusion and anger, though she suppressed her indignation, in the fear of offending a man who possessed such an important influence over the destinies of her country. To her great relief, he at length liberated her hand, seated himself beside her, and entered into conversation.

Antony's fine person was set off to the best advantage by a splendid and most becoming military dress ; his deportment, when he chose it, was at once manly and urbane, and he possessed that ready and variable eloquence which could accommodate itself to the swaggering ribald strain of the soldiery, captivate the populace when he spoke from the rostrum, or enable him to shine amid the high and polished circles of the drawing-room. Upon the present occasion, he exerted himself to win favour with the Sagan and Gabricl, who, from their position, had not observed the amorous stare, and the fulsome palming, which had given such offence to Zillah. Expressing a hope that he should soon have something favourable to communicate to them on the subject of their embassy, and inviting them to sup with him on the following day, he at length took his leave ; when the Hebrews, elevated by the prospect of succeeding in their mission, were loud in his praise,

and Zillah thought it most prudent to be silent, though she could not but contrast his bold and insolent demeanour towards herself, with the winning and respectful homage she had experienced from Felix.

“They are the true Antioch snakes,” said Gabriel, examining her bracelets; “no other city in the world can manufacture them. Every scale is fastened with a brilliant, the eyes are two of the rarest little rubies, and the whole is as flexible as the real animal. The gold and jewels, however, are of no price; their great value is in the exquisite workmanship.” Notwithstanding the high admiration expressed by Gabriel, Zillah regretted she had ever accepted them, tossed them aside as soon as she reached her own apartment, and resolved never to wear them again, unless she should be specially ordered to do so by her father.

No modern dame of quality tutoring her awkward and inexperienced daughter how to

conduct herself upon her first appearance at court, ever gave more elaborate instructions, or ever found a more inapt and graceless pupil, than did Gabriel when he would teach the Sagan how to acquit himself at the supper to which they had been invited, so as not to give offence to their illustrious host, or any of his companions. He felt that this would be the touchstone, the *experimentum crucis* of his kinsman's forbearance and power of accommodation ; and the recent hopes of success thrown out by Mark Antony rendered him doubly anxious not to mar their prospects by any of those little Hebrew petulancies in which the Sagan was so prone to indulge, and which might, perhaps, be more sharply resented by the nationality of the Romans than the gravest misdemeanour. Jerusalem and its interests exercised, as he well knew, a most powerful influence over the mind of his kinsman ; and by continually harping upon this key, he made

him promise at length to submit with a good grace, or at least the best that was possible, to the use of the dinner-bed instead of a chair; to conform to the pagan observances, so far as he might without impiety, (a saving clause stipulated by the Sagan); and to avoid any remarks that might wound the pride, or even the prejudices, of their heathen companions. To all these hard conditions he assented, but not without many compunctionous rebellions of spirit. He was as a martyr who offers to endure the torture from a sense of duty, and for the interests of the true faith, and yet cannot go through the trial without many a quivering of the flesh, and many a groan of the spirit.

CHAPTER II.

FOUR o'clock in the afternoon, an hour at which the genteeler moderns are beginning to think of their lunchcons, was then the prevalent supper-hour of the most fashionable and distinguished Romans; and our Hebrews took good care not to be too late. On their arrival, they passed through the splendid hall, of which we have before made mention, and were ushered into a spacious receiving-room, where some of the guests had already arrived, and more quickly presented themselves; several of them wearing garlands of flowers, and all habited in loose

white robes, the common garment worn at convivial entertainments. Amid all the prodigality and ostentation of these times, a custom of strange meanness—a relic perhaps of former days—still prevailed even among the great. Each guest was expected to provide his own napkin. It was the duty of the slave who brought it to carry it back also ; but it seldom returned empty, generally containing some of the choice delicacies of the supper-table, which the visitants were allowed to send home to their families. As Antony's parties were little calculated for the presence of Octavia, she never appeared at them, nor were there any other females upon this occasion. He himself had not yet entered the apartment ; but Pyttalus whispered to his Hebrew friends the names of the different guests as they arrived, though he was unable to inform them how many more might be expected, or what might be their quality, since Antony himself frequently forgot whom he had asked,

and many of his friends were privileged to come uninvited. A considerable number presented themselves in succession, some bringing humble dependents, who instinctively associated themselves at the lower end of the apartment with Antony's household parasites, and the buffoons, singers, and mimics, whom he considered indispensable assistants at every festive party, although the coarse jocularity which marked his character, and which he had probably picked up in the guard-room and the camp, led him generally to make them the butts of his vulgar raillery, and always to treat them with an insolent disrespect.

The master of the mansion at length made his appearance, assuming a cheerful smile of hilarity as he entered, although his looks were more than usually pale and jaded. Welcoming his friends in general, and the Hebrews in particular, with much courtesy, he apologized for being so late, led the way out of the receiving-

room, and, the large folding-doors at the upper end of the Atrium being thrown open, the guests were ushered into the eating-room—a spacious apartment, painted in fresco, and hung with garlands and festoons of flowers. Here each visitant was furnished with water to wash, after which he was perfumed with rich essences; and slippers being substituted for his sandals, lest they should soil the rich tapestry coverings of the couches, Antony arranged his visitants according to their rank and precedence, the post of honour being given to the Hebrews, and the flies and shadows, as the parasites and retainers were contemptuously termed, being huddled together at the two extremities of the table. This was in the shape of an immense horse-shoe, surrounded on one side with a continuous bed, while within the inner circle stood the numerous slaves and the principal carver, to minister to the wants of the visitants. A richly-decorated canopy hung over the heads of the

party; attendants were stationed at the side-board, which was covered with the most massive and gorgeous gold plate, much of it embossed and inlaid with precious stones; and several others walked about the room ventilating it with large fans of feathers, or scattering perfumed waters upon the floor. All these slaves wore chaplets on their heads. And now began the troubles and vexations of the Sagan. "Oh, Gabriel, Gabriel!" he whispered to his companion, as he crawled awkwardly over the huge semicircular bed, and lay sprawling upon his stomach, with his beard hanging over the cushion, "what painful ease and what laborious laziness is this! Nebuchadnezzar was degraded when he went to graze upon all-fours, like a beast of the field; but how much deeper is our humiliation when we thus grovel to our meals upon our very bellies, like serpents stealing into a larder! And, holy Moses! blessed father Abraham! what do I see? what are these

images? Are they not the accursed Teraphim of the Pagans?" Drawing in his breath with a snarl of horror that displayed his teeth, and made the beard of his upper lip quiver, he pointed to small figures of Mercury, Hercules, and the Penates, ranged along the table, and having the salt placed beside them. Gabriel, knowing that these were reverenced as presiding genii, and that any insult offered to them would be deemed a species of sacrilege, whispered in return, "Remember your pledge! Jerusalem is lost, and we are disgraced for ever, if you notice these superstitious fooleries of the Pagans. Let us conduct ourselves as Caleb and Joshua did among the idolatrous Canaanites.—Saw you ever so beautiful a table as this? It is of the rarest citron-wood, inlaid with silver and ivory, and adorned with asses' heads; in reference, I presume, to the services rendered by that animal to the Bacchanalian Silenus."

The latter part of this speech was intended

to withdraw his kinsman's attention from the obnoxious figures ; but the Sagan, shutting his eyes, shook his head, and drew in his breath with a hissing shudder, which was increased to an agony of silent horror, when Antony, who in the midst of all his profligacy and debauchery was scrupulously devout, according to the fashion of the heathen, poured a small quantity of wine upon the board, as a libation in honour of the Penates, and with a look and accent of the most pious reverence, pronounced the customary prayer. This was too much for the Sagan's powers of endurance ; but the “ **Raca!** ” that he ejaculated was not very loud, its signification was not understood by the guests, and the accompanying look of abhorrence was unheeded.

“ Now, then, who shall be our Symposiarch, our Archi-triclinius, our King of the Feast ? ” exclaimed Antony, with a tone and aspect of sudden animation : “ Slaves ! bring the dice-box.”

“ No casting of lots ! Antony ! Antony ! Antony !” cried many voices at once, amid which those of the “flies” and “shadows” were the loudest and most clamorous. “ Who so fit as he to be our king ?” demanded Pyttalus of his neighbour, in a loud voice. “ Ay, our Basileus Basileon, our king of kings !” The servile sycophants took the hint, and the election was carried by acclamation, amid strains of flattery so direct, abject, and fulsome, that none but a man of coarse and vitiated taste could have listened to them without unqualified disgust.

“ Though I am solitary in my opposition,” cried Fonteius Capito, one of Antony’s most respectable friends, “ I object to our host being crowned as our Symposiarch, for he is manifestly unwell, and his pulse tells me that he cannot do justice to his own hospitable feelings without drinking more wine than may become his feverish state.”

“ This question concerns not me,” said Anthony ; “ I leave my health in the hands of Pyttalus. How say you, Greek, cannot you find some warrant in my pulse for deep potations ?”

“ I cannot, in my conscience,” replied the physician, feeling his patron’s hand.

“ Well, then, find it out of your conscience ; find it in a quibble, a sophism, any where. Give me but a reason, however irrational : let me but be right in theory, and I will take upon myself all the consequences of acting wrong. In medical matters I can only say with Socrates, ‘ I know that I know nothing ;’ but as to toping, I ought to be a proficient in it every way, for I have had long and staunch practice, and I have moreover written a treatise upon drunkenness, which I shall perhaps present to the world one of these days.” *

“ Nay, I meant not to restrain you altogether

* Bayle says it was published before the battle of Actium.

from the use of wine," said Pyttalus, who knew his patron's fondness for syllogistic quibbles ; " it is only a question of quantity. Every man in a fever may take some degree of wine—every man has some degree of fever—every man, therefore, may quaff his *modicum*. What this may be, will depend upon circumstances."

" Answered like yourself. You have untied the knot by tangling it, and so obscured the matter by your illustrations, that Pyrrho himself could not have placed it in a more luminous uncertainty. You dreamed, I dare say, that I should follow my own inclinations, and this generally proves a true phantasm. And yet I myself lately dreamed that we ought not to believe in dreams. How expound you this ?"

" This is no riddle of the Sphinx ; it is easily solved ; for if you do believe in dreams, it follows, of course, that you ought not to believe in this : but if you do not believe in them, you ought to believe in it."

“Enough! enough! we can see that you come from Athens, for you can only speak in riddles. Slaves! give me the Symposiarch’s crown. It is but to swallow a little extra snow when the repast is over, and all will be well. Now let the feast begin.”

Needing no second invitation, his guests proceeded eagerly to the discussion of the rare and costly viands set before them, and all was presently business and bustle, amid the fuming of disjointed meats, the clattering of silver plates and dishes, and the clink of cups and cans. With the taste of a people just emerging from barbarism, and intoxicated with their inordinate wealth, the Romans loved to display an insane extravagance in their dishes, which had not even any reference to the gratification of the palate; while with a characteristic coarseness they generally entertained a sycophant at their tables, to blazon to the company this ostentatious waste. Such was the office of Pyttalus,

who not only gave the cost and history of every rarity, but at the same time that he abstained from tasting it himself, took good care that it should not descend to any of the parasites and clients at the lower ends of the table.

Fonteius was almost the only one who ventured to address his host with the rough honesty of a friend, and even to rate him openly and severely for his loose unguarded conduct ; more particularly for his public exhibitions with the abandoned Cytheris. “ I shall never call her by the same name as the virtuous wife of Coriolanus,” he exclaimed, “ but I have no objection to give her the more appropriate one of Volupia, for she is indeed a goddess of sensuality, and treads down virtue under her feet.”

“ It is precisely as such that I adore her ; and if she treat nothing but virtue in the manner you have mentioned, it is clear that she will never trample upon me.”

“ But in spite of the money you lavish upon her, she loves you not.”

“ Yonder delicate turbot, and this Maltese crane, love me not, and yet I feed upon them with a great deal of pleasure.”

* “ But she bestows her favours upon others.”

“ I can still say what Aristippus said of Lais —I have Volumnia, but Volumnia has them. A good archer will unbend his bow to prevent its being useless ; so do I my mind,—so we do all : and although my follies may be different from yours, they are not more extravagant. It is your fancy to imitate in every thing your deceased friend Hortensius, the advocate. Thus, like him, you brought an action against one of your colleagues for deranging your gown as you went into court ;—you have a favourite plane-tree, which you moisten every day with wine ; you have fish in your ponds, of whose ages you keep an exact register, of whose health you are more careful than even of your own, and upon

which you set such store, that you would rather give your friend a mule than a mullet. These are your Volumnias. These are worse than crimes ; they are imitations. I am at least original in my vices."

This colloquy had not passed without interruption ; for whenever the founder of the feast opened his mouth, Pyttalus and half a dozen more of his abject companions were ready with their "Hist ! hush ! silence ! Antony is going to speak!"—and the burst of admiration that followed each of his rejoinders was so long and loud, that he could not for some time renew his discourse.

Immediately opposite to our Hebrews two young men were lying next to one another, who appeared to be intimate friends, since they mixed little in the general conversation, but talked together earnestly in a low tone of voice. The Sagan's attention was drawn towards them by a remark of Antony, that few people, like

Cæsar, could wield the pen and sword with equal superiority and success. "Nature," he observed, "seldom bestows unfair advantages upon any of her productions by conferring upon them more than one perfection at a time. The fleet greyhound has no sense of smelling ; the beautiful peacock has no voice ; and our guest yonder, young Virgil, though he can write with such splendid and sonorous fluency, cannot express himself without hesitation ; while his friend Horace, who lolls beside him, though he has an intellect that can pierce through obscurity itself, is afflicted with such weak eyes that he cannot see across the supper-table."

Directing his regards towards the poets with a stricter scrutiny than he had previously thought necessary, the Sagan observed that Virgil, apparently about thirty years old, was of a pale delicate complexion, and slender habit ; while his friend Horace, who seemed about four years younger, and wore a shade

over his eyes, was rather short and stout, though scarcely more florid than his companion ; a paleness which their host banteringly attributed to the use of cummin-water, often drunk by the literati, to impart a more wan and studious hue to their cheeks. “ Well, farmer,” he exclaimed, addressing himself to Virgil, “ when our friend Asinius Pollio triumphs over the Illyrians, I suppose you will throw away your shepherd’s pipe, take up a nobler instrument, and ‘ strike the martial chords with epic fire.’ ”

“ I have no taste for military subjects, nor do I like them,” said the Mantuan : “ I agree with Octavius, that war is angling with a golden hook, which, if we break or lose it, is worth more than the fish we might catch. I would rather teach my countrymen how to subdue the soil, than attempt to give them a needless lesson in conquering their enemies. Better husbandmen I may, perhaps, make them ; braver

or more expert soldiers no art can render them."

" I will bet my Campanian farm against yours, which is gold against brass, that you hate all soldiers, because Arius, the Centurion, handled you so roughly, that you were forced to swim across the Mincius, when you reclaimed your estate from him. Tell me honestly, is it not so ? And what says your friend Flaccus ? Like myself, he has been at Athens, and trod the groves of Academus, till Brutus coaxed him away, and made him a military Tribune. He has tried both—which means he to celebrate ?—peace or war ?"

" Love, wine, the philosophy of the Epicureans, and the pleasures of peace, will be my first subjects," said Horace ; " but should I live to see the Temple of Janus shut, I may, perhaps, celebrate the exploits that led to it, and sing of the sword, the spear, and the battle."

" Sing of the sword and spear by all means, but

say not a word of the shield ; chant as loudly as you will of battles, but always except that of Philippi." A shout of laughter, at the bard's expense, signalized the success of this coarse raillery, which bore allusion to his ignominious flight, and his leaving his shield behind him at the fight of Philippi. "I must remind you," said the blushing poet, "of your own dictum, 'that nature seldom bestows two perfections on the same individual ;' and that he, therefore, who can immortalize battles in his verse, ought not to be expected to win them with his sword."

"Right, right! and yours is the nobler attribute, if you could but be sure of its success. You bards are all apt to prophesy an immortality for your verses : and it is a safe vanity ; for if your works perish, the prediction expires with them. But, after all, we do but scratch our names upon the sand ; the tide of time soon rolls over them, and effaces them for ever. How many of the present company, think you,

will be heard of five hundred years hence?—I can read nothing now," he continued, to a slave who tendered him a letter. " Even the industrious Asinius Pollio never opens one after four o'clock, nor will I. What is the device of the seal? Is it a frog? No! Then it comes not from Mæcenas. Nor a Sphinx? Then it is not from Octavius. But it is rolled up, I see, in the ancient form. Away with it! I will receive none that are not folded flat and square, after the fashion of Julius Cæsar.—We were talking of an immortality of fame, were we not? Who so likely to have achieved it as my friend Julius? His Commentaries will have the same chance as the works of my poetical guests, Virgil and Horace; the new æra which he established, by the reformation of the calendar, bears his name, so that he has fastened himself to the back of Time itself; one of our months is his imperishable namesake; and as if he had not made sufficiently sure of the earth, he has left

his signature in the sky, and perpetuated his memory by the Julian star. Who would not be assassinated for such an eternity of fame?"

"Clear your plates, gentlemen, for the wild boar!" cried Pyttalus, with a loud voice. "It is a young Lucanian, caught when the wind was south, and the dew upon the ground, after a heavy fall of acorns, so that the benign and happy state of the animal might communicate a sure tenderness to its flesh. Our generous host ordered eight to be roasted, in order that one might be done to an exact turn when the happy moment should arrive for bringing it to table. Music! strike up for the wild boar!"

A band of wind-instruments stationed in the room obeyed the summons, and at the same moment the Sagan, starting upon his knees, ejaculated, with a look of profound horror, "El Elohim!—it is the unutterable flesh—the beast of abomination—the same which the sacrilegious Antiochus set up over the altar of burnt-

offering. Let us be gone, Gabriel ; our ancestors suffered death under Epiphanes rather than endure it, and so should we. Let us gird up our loins and fly."

Antony, who did not immediately understand the cause of his guest's perturbation, laughed heartily when it was explained to him ; assuring him, however, as soon as he recovered his sense of politeness, that had he recollected the repugnance of the Hebrews, he would have countermanded the obnoxious dish, although the Romans considered it their greatest delicacy. "I will order it," he added, "to be carryed at a side-table, that it may not offend your eyes ; for I reverence too much the injunctions of my own religion, not to respect every scruple of conscience in others, even though I may think it frivolous or irrational. Resume your place, therefore, I pray you. Slaves ! fill the cups :—My friends and guests !

“we will drink to a long friendship and alliance between the Romans and the Hebrews.”

Gabriel had already pulled his kinsman down upon the couch, with imploring whispers that he would be pacified, since nobody expected him to eat of the prohibited viand—an assurance which, added to the courteous demeanour of his host, so far reconciled the Sagan to his lot, that he resumed his former posture, drank the toast of mutual amity, and then, shutting his mouth, his eyes, and as much as possible his nostrils, he maintained an agonized silence, only interrupted by an occasional groan, until the hateful meat was dispatched; a process which the ravenous avidity of his neighbours speedily accomplished.

“I marvel much,” said Antony, “why so many sapid and innocuous delicacies should have been denied to you by your law-giver. What would our Apicius say to a people who

are forbidden the use of both fat and gravy? Your gastronomic lot is surely a forlorn one: you had no poultry, I believe, in Palestine, until Pompey introduced them, as some recompense for the conquest of Jerusalem. Your sick people dare not drink asses' milk, nor taste of things strangled; and the best of your fish, flesh, and fowls are like the fruits of the starving Tantalus, offered to your eyes and lips only to be denied to your hunger and thirst. Why should so delicate and unobjectionable an animal as the hare, for instance, be pronounced unclean, and thus become an alien to your tables?"

" For wise purposes, unquestionably, since the injunction came from Moses; but we hold it our duty to obey the law, not to question it," replied the Sagan.

" Were I a king, I should like such subjects, but I would hardly accept their sovereignty, if my palate were to be made the slave of their own

starving code." Antony now addressed himself for some little time to his friend Fonteius and the two poets; evincing a shrewdness of intellect, a felicity of diction, and even an occasional elevation of sentiment, that would not have discredited Cicero himself, and from the dignity of which even the fulsome plaudits of his adulators at the lower end of the table could scarcely derogate. These nobler effusions, however, were the emanations of his head, rather than of his heart. As the wine circulated, his natural propensity to low buffoonery, practical jokes, and ribald, vulgar foolery, became more and more manifest. One of his boon companions, who had obtained the nickname of Cotylon, or the cup, from his great bibulous powers, was called upon to exhibit them, by emptying at a draught a prodigious flagon filled with Chian wine. A second, surnamed Bambalio, from his habit of stuttering, was plied with rapid questions in order that

the impediment in his speech, aggravated by his eagerness to reply to so many impatient querists, might afford amusement to the company. A third, called Hercules, from his prodigious voracity, and who in eating possessed the enviable properties of puffing the wind from his nostrils like a bellows, crashing bones with a loud crackling noise, and moving both his ears, was set to work upon a huge goose, merely, as it seemed, that Antony, in the intervals of his loud laughter, might quote, for the tenth time at least, some Greek verses of Epicharmus, admirably expressive of the glutinous ferocity with which Hercules once devoured a whole ox at a single meal. Pyttalus, who carefully watched his patron's eye, saw that the time had now arrived when the “flies and shadows” might be put in requisition for his amusement; and giving a private signal to the slaves, they deposited upon the lower ends of the table a supposititious dessert, of which

the pastry was painted wood, the fruits of wax, the wine only coloured water, while the figs, which were the sole real edible, were stuffed with pungent pepper, or active medical drugs. The wry faces of the sufferers, none of whom dared to complain ; the abortive efforts of some to carry off the affair as an excellent joke, and of others to conceal the annoyance they experienced, afforded infinite amusement to the host, and, indeed, to the greater number of his guests, who had been accustomed to consider the parasites as fair game, and the legitimate butts of every clownish pleasantry.

Singers and mimics next contributed their talents to promote the festive hilarity of the evening. Among the latter, Pyttalus played no undistinguished part ; the Sagan and Gabriel both being astonished at the marvellous facility with which he personated the character of a rough, unsuspecting, honest, Boeotian peasant, and at the surprising contrast he offered,

when he resumed his own ambushed half-closed eye, and the watchful wary craftiness of his ordinary physiognomy. The wine, which was served in large earthen vases, was not in the mean time forgotten; the seals, stamped with the consulate and growth, were anxiously consulted by the more experienced *gourmets*; and the handsomely attired Ganymedes, whose office it was to fetch the silver drinking-cups, and dip them into the capacious jars, were seldom seen to stand still. The *modicum* to which Antony had promised to restrict himself was by no means a very limited one; and his festivity was at its height, when one of the superior domestics entered, and presented him a packet of dispatches, bound round with a wreath of faded laurel-leaves. He tore it hastily open, his countenance lowering with an angry and mortified expression as he read the contents. “Here is a fresh victory achieved over the Parthians by my lieu-

tenant Ventidius," he exclaimed, tossing the packet petulantly from him: "Why do I loiter here, wasting my time in political intrigues and riotous excess?—why do I suffer this low-born Ventidius, originally a chairman and a muleteer, to achieve victories with my own troops, which I alone ought to have fought and won? What has become of Mark Antony?"

"He has lost himself, as I have often told him," whispered Fonteius in his ear; "but it is not too late for his recovery, if he will hasten to his government, forget Cleopatra, and remember nothing but the past glory of himself and of his army."

"He who has won a mural crown," said Pyt-talus; "who traversed the Serbonian bog, and captured Pelusium; who commanded the left wing at the battle of Pharsalia; who defeated Cassius at Philippi; who has been the hero of every engagement in which he fought,—may

surely allow a spare victory or two to this lucky muleteer Ventidius. Were I Mark Anthony——”

“ Be silent, sirrah !” interposed Antony, with a stern look and voice ; “ you cannot enter into my feelings, and I want not to know yours :” and he whispered apart with his friend Fonteius for two or three minutes ; after which, throwing off the momentary depression that had assailed him, he called to the cupbearers with a cheerful countenance, bidding them fill the goblets to the brim, and himself pledging his guests in a full bumper of Falernian. Animated by this example, the song, the joke, and the laugh were renewed ; the wine circulated more freely than before ; and, as the evening advanced, the conversation became at once more licentious and noisy ; Fescennine verses, of no very decorous tendency, were recited by one of the party ; the buffoons performed their mountebank-tricks ; and a troop of female dancers being introduced,

first exhibited their adroitness as jugglers, and then displayed their skill in the voluptuous movements of the Asiatic dance. Antony himself, as he quaffed fresh bumpers, entered with a boisterous festivity into the spirit of the jovial hour. “Bring me no more letters or messages!” he exclaimed to his principal domestic; “I will see no visitants, neither would I move from my couch if the Consuls, Praetors, Tribunes, and Aediles, with the whole body of the Conspect Fathers, were to besiege my gate. Away!”

The servant left the apartment, and Antony, in the heyday of a rampant wine-inspired hilarity, had just proposed that they should throw their chaplets into the large vase of Falernian, and “drink the crowns,” when the door opened, and there appeared a tall, thin, gaunt, shabbily-at-tired figure, whose swarthy skin attested the influence of a fierce southern sun, whose hungry grizzled beard was trimmed into a wedgelike

shape, while his dark, eager, flaring eyes seemed to be starting from his head. "I would have speech with you," he exclaimed, in a hollow voice, as he stood near the door, and beckoned to Antony; when, to the utter amazement of the Hebrews, the countenance of the Triumvir became instantly sobered, he apologized to his guests for leaving them for a short time, and though he had just before declared that the whole magistracy of the country should not induce him to quit his couch, he immediately left it, followed the shabby-looking old man out of the room with an air of deferential submission, and disappeared.

At first, the Sagan was almost disposed to imagine that it was some supernatural apparition, for he could hardly deem it possible that a mere mortal could exercise such a mysterious influence over the daring and haughty spirit of Antony; until he gathered, from the conversation of Pyttalus, that the stranger was the

Egyptian Astrologer, whom his noble patron kept in the house, and who had probably made some important divination or discovery, of which it was necessary that his employer should be instantly apprised. The Sagan, scandalized at much that he had been compelled to witness, had been long waiting an opportunity to withdraw. Nothing had detained him so long but the difficulty of detaching himself becomingly from his couch; but as several of the guests availed themselves of the absence of their host to quit their recumbent posture, and walk about the room, he twitched Gabriel by the arm, and made his escape from the house, right glad that he had gone through the painful ordeal of supping with a Pagan Triumvir, and fully resolved that no considerations should induce him thus to lower his Hebrew dignity a second time.

CHAPTER III.

SEVERAL weeks elapsed, during which the Sagan and Gabriel had as many interviews with Mark Antony, but without making much progress in the negotiation. Antony, indeed, was in a state of such perpetual irresolution,—now waiting the arrival of dispatches from his government in the East, now resolving on an immediate rupture with his rival: at one time induced by prudential considerations, and the advice of friends, to prolong the appearance of amity; and at another, wavering between conflicting opinions,—that he hardly knew in what

predicament he should himself be shortly placed, and was therefore unable to decide what course of policy to adopt with respect to King Antigonus. It was characteristic of the man, that amid such paramount and absorbing claims upon his attention, at the very moment when, by his intrigues, he was hurrying on events in which his own fame and life would probably be involved, his designs upon Zillah were never for an instant abandoned, and occupied his thoughts quite as much perhaps as his meditated struggle with Octavius for the dominion of the world. At the last of the interviews we have mentioned, and the only one at which Gabriel had not been present, he interrupted the Sagan, by abruptly exclaiming, “Did you not tell me, that your King stipulated to give the Parthians, for placing him on the throne, not only a large sum of money, but five hundred Jewish women?”

“He bound himself by treaty so to do; but finding himself subsequently unable to fulfil

the conditions, so far as regarded the females, he supplied an additional sum of money."

"Aha ! so much the worse for the poor Parthians. Five hundred was too great a number ; I should be disposed to be much more moderate. What would Antigonus say, think you, and how would you yourself entertain the proposition, were I to offer a treaty, offensive and defensive, to your nation, for only a five-hundredth part of what the Parthian demanded—for a single female, whom I would elevate to a proud eminence,—for no other, in short, than your own daughter, the beautiful Zillah ?"

"El Elohim ! did I hear thee right ?" shouted the Sagan, starting from his seat, snorting with sudden rage, and bringing his quivering beard close to the face of Antony. "Thou Mamzer ! thinkest thou my child is a Dalilah, a Rahab, a wanton that will offer herself to every neighing unicorn of the Pagans ! Belial ! thinkest thou that the daughters of Jerusalem-

hakdoshoh are like those of Chaldea, who prostitute themselves in honour of the obscene Succoth-Benoth ? Thou devil ! am I father, like Ahaz and Manasseh, to offer up my child as a sacrifice to Moloch ? Thou worshipper of the filthy Astarte ! thinkest thou that Zillah, who is a thousand times more pure than thy lascivious goddess of Pagan chastity——”

“ A truce ! a truce !” exclaimed Antony, who saw that the infuriated father was talking himself into an increased rage: “ I had been told that the Hebrews understood not raillery, and I was determined to try the experiment. You have considered the matter too seriously. I spoke but in jest.”

“ Raca ! the honour of his child is no fit subject of banter for a father’s ear. Such a jest is an insult, and I recal not, therefore, the invectives it provoked ; but shall withdraw myself, in obedience to the words of Solomon— ‘ Go from the presence of a foolish man when

thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge.'"

"Nay, there shall be no wrath in our parting," said Antony. "You have applied to me terms which I would not endure from any Roman that wears a sword,—scarcely from Mars himself, even if he had his spear at my heart; but I forgive them, in consideration of your sacred character, and of your ignorance of our customs. To banter with a Sagan of the Hebrews is, I find, more perilous than to twitch the Capitoline Jupiter by the beard. But come, I demanded a truce, let it be confirmed into a peace; and the better to dispose you to this pact of mutual amity as an individual, I may tell you, that there is every appearance of my being soon enabled to decide favourably upon the great object of your mission, and to form an alliance with your nation. My dispatches of this morning warrant this supposition, but I have as yet hardly had time to consider them.

Call upon me in two days, and I doubt not that I shall then be in a situation to pronounce definitively, and thus leave you at liberty to return to your own country,—a consummation which, I dare say, you will not be sorry to accomplish."

By such cheering suggestions he succeeded in pacifying the wrath of the Sagan, or, at least, in inducing him to conceal it; for though a deep indignation still rankled at his breast, he reflected that it would be little less than madness to quarrel with the Triumvir, now that the negotiation was in such a promising train, and more especially as its successful termination would empower him to leave Rome instantly, and thus to withdraw Zillah from the danger of any such insults as that to which he had just been compelled to listen. Unsuspecting as was his general nature, he was jealous even of a shadow that might sully the purity of his daughter's name; so that, notwithstanding

Antony's protestations to the contrary, he could not altogether discard a latent misgiving, which determined him, at all events, to hasten the close of his embassy, and remove her quickly from a capital that threatened to be any thing rather than the city of refuge he had so confidently expected to find it.

During the interval we have mentioned, Mark Antony had paid several visits to the Sagan, in all of which his demeanour towards Zillah had been of the same bold and offensive character as in their first interview. In his transactions with women, he had been little accustomed to experience difficulties; and when he did encounter them, it only inflamed his passion, and stimulated his haughty offended pride to become a party in accomplishing the gratification of his desires. The calm but severe dignity with which Zillah's looks and actions had rebuked his audacious eagerness, combined with the majestic reserve of her general man-

ners, soon convinced him that she was not to be won by any of the blandishments or incentives that might influence other females. To intimidate such a woman, would be no easy task ; to tempt her ambition even by the promise of a kingdom, offered little chance of success ; to win her affections, was beyond the limit of his fondest hopes ; and yet, before he had recourse to those ultimate measures of violence, on which he had fully resolved, whatever might be the issue of his desperate enterprise, one remaining alternative suggested itself to his adoption. Taught to consider the Hebrews as not less bigoted in their patriotism than fanatical in their religion, it occurred to him, that, by an adroit appeal to both these feelings, Zillah might be perhaps induced to sacrifice herself to a sense of duty, if he could only persuade her that the salvation of Jerusalem was placed in her own hands—depended upon her sole decision. “ If similar motives,”

he whispered to himself, “once exercised such supremacy in a female breast, as to induce Iphigenia to make an offer of her life for the good of her country, why may not they persuade this imperious Jewess to the much cheaper sacrifice of surrendering her chastity?”

Inspired with fresh hopes of success from this new project, preposterous as it was, and furnished, as he flattered himself, with good arguments for advancing it, he presented himself at the Sagan’s lodgings the day after the angry interview at his own house, and was so far favoured by circumstances, that he found Zillah alone. Discarding that licentious look and familiar impudence of demeanour, which had so deeply offended her in their previous interviews, and assuming the persuasive tone of a man who wishes to appeal to the religion, patriotism, and reason of his auditress, he commenced his infamous proposition by citing an

example from the Jewish history, which he thought calculated not only to remove her scruples, but even to enlist her conscience in the cause of her own dishonour. "In my frequent conversations, most beautiful Zillah, with your rich countryman Apella, who is settled here at Rome,"—it was thus that he began his insidious speech, "I remember, among other narratives he related to me from your sacred writings, that when Vashti, the wife of Ahasuerus, the Persian monarch, had been divorced, one of your Hebrew maidens, who has become immortalized alike by her beauty and her patriotism—her name was Esther, if I mistake not—offered herself to the love of the king, though he was a stranger to her religion, in the hope of benefiting her countrymen, then in grievous thraldom and captivity. She became the royal favourite, and when an edict was passed for the general destruction of the Jews, her relation Mordecai intreated her to interpose

in their behalf, suggesting that God had probably raised her to that high station for this express purpose. Piety and patriotism at once urging her to comply with this appeal, she resolved to perform her duty even at the hazard of her life. Her interference proved successful ; her zeal and courage preserved her countrymen from extermination ; and in remembrance of this critical deliverance, the name of Esther is rendered perpetually illustrious in your calendar by the Feast of Purim, solemnly observed on every anniversary of the day that had been thus marked out for the destruction of your nation. Does my memory serve me ? Am I not substantially correct ?”

Zillah admitted that his version of the story was substantially accurate, much wondering whither this formal exordium was to lead. “ Now mark me well,” resumed Antony : “ your nation is again in imminent and deadly peril, threatened with all the horrors of an extermi-

nating civil war, for my dispatches inform me, that Herod, with an infuriated army, is ravaging the country far and wide, and advancing even to the walls of Jerusalem. Nothing but the omnipotence of the Romans can arrest this calamity, and I, by wielding this mighty power, am the sole arbiter of the destinies of the East. Were I to pledge myself that I would drive Herod and his mercenaries from the land ; that I would throw the shield of invincible Rome around the Holy City ; that I would secure the peace, happiness, and prosperity of Palestine ; were I not only to promise, but to perform all this, and to demand from you no other reward but that which Esther, under similar circumstances, felt it her solemn duty to bestow upon King Ahasuerus ; tell me, beautiful Zillah, could you, consistently with the obligations which you owe to your God, your country, and your own conscience, feel yourself justified in incurring the awful responsibilities of a refusal ?

Nay, start not thus angrily from me, nor let the impetuous blood redden your cheeks, your very forehead, though it emblazons your beauty, even as when I first beheld you in the forest of Aricia. Your looks of indignation tell me what you would urge—that Esther became the Persian’s wife. Why may not Zillah hereafter become Mark Antony’s? Vashti was divorced—Octavia may be discarded in the same manner; and if Zillah, taking compassion upon Jerusalem and the Jews, will imitate the pious and illustrious Esther, and accompany me into the East, she shall, if she desire it, be made chief Priestess of the Temple of the Sun, at Alexandria—a dignity little less than regal, and one which I had intended to reserve for a near relation of my own.”

Zillah was for some seconds absolutely paralysed by the distraction of contending emotions. Amazement, indignation, disgust at the impious thought that her religion and patriotism should

be made the advocates for her prostitution; horror at the outrageous notion of her becoming a heathen priestess,—were all struggling to find a vent, and yet were all repressed by the same considerations that had influenced the Sagan to command his ebullient rage. She *did* feel the awful responsibility to which Antony had alluded, and having previously learned the promising state and approaching close of the negotiation, she hesitated at endangering its failure, by any intemperate language, or at giving full vent to her tingling indignation, until she should have had an opportunity of consulting her father as to the conduct it became her to adopt. Conquering, therefore, the resentment that fired her bosom, she exclaimed with a forced, and yet scornful composure—“ I do not consider that this insult has been offered to myself, but to her for whom you mistook me. Recollect yourself, Sir; you have not been addressing a Pagan damsel, such as those with whom it may have

been your wont to indulge in dalliance and loose discourse ; but Zillah, the daughter of Malachi Ben Lachish, the Sagan of Jerusalem,—a pious Hebrew maiden, who need not command you to abstain from any such audacity in future, since she herself will take care that her ears shall never again be thus polluted.” So saying, she instantly averted her eyes, and walked slowly out of the apartment.

Antony was stung to the quick ; not by her words, for they were calmly uttered, and touched him not ; but by that mingled look of horror and contempt, which was much sharper than her rebuke ; by that indignant outbursting of her soul, which as it kindled her eyes, and made the boiling blood leap into every reddening vein from brow to bosom, convinced him that his suit was utterly hopeless ; that he was an object of unutterable scorn and loathing to her whom he had been thus humbling himself to propitiate. “ Aha ! it is well, it is very

well!" he muttered to himself with a malicious sneer, and in a tone of bitterly wounded pride; "I am not sorry that the insolent barbarian has driven me to the necessity of that violence which I would have condescended to spare her. I have tamed more haughty termagants than this; if her heart will not bend it must break; at all events, she shall quickly learn that Mark Antony suffers not his wishes to be thwarted; and he walked rapidly out of the house, as if resolved to concert instant measures for the gratification of his desires and of his resentment, both of which now pointed towards the same victim.

If any thing could aggravate Zillah's indignation at the insult she had just received, it was the contrast which it presented to the tender and respectful homage she had invariably experienced from the youthful Felix: a distinguished soldier, like Mark Antony, and of a descent equally illustrious, but oh! how different in his demeanour, in every thing! How delicate in his

deference, how liberal and comparatively enlightened amid all the prejudices of his Pagan education, how touching in his deep melancholy, how fervent in the gratitude with which every cell of his heart appeared to be suffused, how elevated in his sentiments, how pure and irreproachable in his conduct, surrounded as he was by the temptations of youth and opulence, and exposed to all the corrupting examples of heathen profligacy!—He, too, had been an almost daily visitant during the interval that had elapsed since the occurrence at the theatre, every fresh interview ingratiating him more and more into the favour of his Hebrew friends. Even the Sagan's deep-rooted aversion to the Pagans admitted a certain degree of modification in favour of Felix, whose superior amiability and intelligence he gradually brought himself to allow, and whom he gladly accepted as their guide in all their excursions, in preference to the sly and sneering Pyttalus. Gabriel

chanted his praises all day long, calling him the very Phœnix of the Gentiles, especially after he had prevailed upon him to exchange the pale sardonyx in his ring for one of a ruddier hue, and a more rare transparency ; and it must not be supposed, because Zillah was generally silent when these eulogiums were pronounced by others, and never hazarded any herself, that she was less sensible of his merits, less penetrated by his ardent gratitude, less touched by his manifest yet timid homage, less profoundly interested in his fate. In some of their conversations he had partly revealed to her the latent sources of his melancholy ; and the peculiar delicacy of female tact soon enabling her to divine the remainder, she generally turned the discourse upon those subjects, the obscurity of which had thrown a gloom over his mind, a gloom which she believed it to be within her power, as much as she felt it to be her inclination, to dissipate. Imagining herself to be

following a mere religious impulse in thus cheering the despondency and enlightening the mind of a poor benighted youth, whose life she had accidentally been the means of preserving, and whose bewildered, wandering soul she was anxious to bring into the path of the only true and consoling faith, she was not herself aware how much her heart had already become interested in these suggestions of duty, how impatiently she expected the renewal of their conferences, how keenly she felt the disappointment if any thing occurred to prevent them.

This, however, was a rare event ; for Felix, who looked forward to them with an intensity of delighted expectation that absorbed every faculty of his soul, suffered no necessity that was not imperative and insuperable to wrench him from her presence. Zillah lent him a Greek version of the Pentateuch belonging to her father ; and Felix, who was perfectly conversant with that language, devoured its con-

tents with an avidity only to be equalled by the rapt, concentrated, and almost breathless attention with which he listened to his fair instruc-tress, as she expounded to him such passages as required illustration, or translated for him at every visit certain portions of the Prophets. At first his mind was bewildered by the sublimity of the prospects opened to it, dazzled by the sudden influx of too great a light; while the incomprehensibility of some things, the apparently objectionable nature of others, and the credulous fanaticism which he had always heard attributed to the Jews, kept him in an intermediate state between implicit faith and total disbelief. What he did receive, however, was sufficient to expel for ever the last lingering dregs of Paganism; while the discussion of such exhilarating and purifying subjects, together with the occasional gleams of a brighter and more glorious light than any that had yet dawned upon his soul, chased away much of

the cloudy gloom and despondency by which it had been saddened. This was an additional stimulant to his gratitude; and whatever might be the indecision in his faith, there was none whatever in his passionate devotedness to his fair instructress. It increased with every interview; his companionless heart and his unsupported soul had at length found the associate and the sustaining prop for which they had so long been yearning; and Felix offered another example that the torch of love never burns so brightly, so purely, so unquenchably, as when it is kindled at the flaming altar of religion.

When Zillah reached her own room, after the departure of Mark Antony, she had, in the first instance, resolved to communicate to her father, as soon as he should return, the gross indignity to which she had been subjected; but when her abated resentment allowed a more deliberate communing with her own thoughts, she determined to defer this communication,

at least for four-and-twenty hours. She knew that the Sagan was to have an interview with Antony next day, which was expected to be final, and favourable. Every thing, indeed, announced the immediate termination of the embassy. Pyttalus had called in the morning, and, declaring that his illustrious patron now held himself warranted in accepting the jewels, since the ambassadors were so soon to receive their dismissal, had carried them off with him. This he would have done without the ceremony of any written acknowledgment; but Gabriel, who could hardly part from his darlings without weeping, and desired at least to have something to show for them, drew up a very circumstantial receipt, which the Greek signed, and bore away the treasure. Knowing the choleric, the ungovernable temper of her father, Zillah dreaded lest by any sudden ebullition of wrath in the present most critical state of affairs, he might mar all the prospects of the embassy, and com-

promise the interests of the whole Jewish nation. Of such a calamity she dreaded to become the cause ; if she tried not to avert it, she would hereafter have unceasing occasion for self-reproach ; an incalculable good might be accomplished, while no commensurate danger was to be apprehended, from delaying the communication for a single day ; and the result of this summary was a determination to say nothing to her father until after his next interview with **Mark Antony**.

The anxiety of her thoughts at night chasing sleep from her pillow, she wrapped herself up in a warm mantle, threw open the linen blinds, seated herself by the window, and gazed upon the garden beneath. It was past the hour of midnight, and although probably a perfect silence had not for several centuries existed in Rome, the mighty roar of its morning tumult was no longer heard ; its countless swarms were mostly buried in sleep, and of those that

still waked and moved, the sounds had dwindled to a distant and indistinct hum. In the garden beneath every thing was still and hushed. The bright cloudless moon looked serenely down through the cool clear air, silvering over the sloping roofs of the surrounding houses, and the trees, and the heads of three or four statues mounting guard upon the terrace below, with a white light, which reposed immovably upon them like a thin snow. Now and then a slight passing brecze occasioned a gentle rustling amid the leaves, but it was only as if they were murmuring in their sleep ; anon they became motionless and silent as before, not a breeze, not a leaf, not a shadow moving, and even the statues looking as if they had fallen asleep where they stood. So profound a tranquillity in the midst of such a world of thick clustering houses, and so dense a population as that of Rome, carried with it, to Zillah's apprehensions, an affecting sense of loneliness, as

if she were looking out upon a city of the dead ; while there was, at the same time, something soothing in the thought, that she was brought into communion with Nature—with the moon, the skies, and the trees, even in the focus of a thronged metropolis.

Such meditations were soon dissipated by emotions of the most lively astonishment not unmixed with alarm ; for suddenly, from amid the trees on the shaded side of the garden, where, however, she could discern no object, perceive no signs of motion, she heard the notes of a sackbut, playing the same low and gentle prelude which she distinctly remembered to have heard from the mysterious Esau when he had serenaded her at the same hour from the inn-yard at Solomon's Well. Clear as she was with respect to the identity of the music, she almost hesitated to trust her senses ; but this momentary delusion was soon chased away, when the unseen minstrel, having ascertained probably

that his strains would now be caught by the ear for which they were intended, struck the chords with a wilder and more rapid movement, and in the same sweet and manly voice which she had formerly heard, although in a less subdued tone, poured forth this lay of warning :—

“ O Maiden of Jerusalem ! beware ! beware !

O listen to my song, Lady fair !

There 's a net above your head,

And a pitfall where you tread,

And around your path is spread

A snare.”

“ O listen, Rose of Sharon, to my lay, to my lay,

And its warning voice implicitly obey ;

”Tis Antony has set

The pitfall, snare, and net,

But flight may shun them yet,

Away !”

These words, answering so exactly to the promptings of her own fears, fell upon her

heart like the voice of some supernatural being : of her guardian angel, perchance; for such their quick intelligence of her danger, and their friendly import, might almost warrant her in concluding. She gazed, therefore, towards the spot whence the sounds had emanated with a feeling that almost amounted to solemn awe, when, after a pause of some continuance, she heard a rustling amid the leaves, and lo ! Esau, the self-styled wild man of the mountain, came forth, holding a sackbut in his hand, walked slowly across the moon-lit garden, and again disappeared amid the deep shade of the trees on the opposite side. “ Amazement ! ” ejaculated Zillah in an almost breathless whisper. “ How did he gain admittance to this enclosure ? how learned he the designs of Antony against which he would guard me ? who apprised him of our place of residence in Rome ? and why, if his purposes be thus friendly, does he not come forward to avow them—to

specify the nature of my peril—to shield me from mine enemy? But hist! hist! he may renew his song, and give me a clearer insight into the snares by which I am environed.” In this expectation she remained for a considerable time at the window, but all was again hushed, no sound met her eager ear, no movement caught her watchful eye; it was clear that her kind monitor, having accomplished the purpose of his visit, had effected his retreat. Feeling herself chilled by the night atmosphere, she at length closed the blinds, and threw herself upon the bed, a prey to bewilderment and anxiety that banished every thought of slumber.

Although the perils which had been so long encompassing her, seemed now about to close and grasp her; although the storm which had been gathering was now ready to burst upon her devoted head; although the dark predictions of Nabal were manifestly upon the point

of receiving their accomplishment, Zillah's most prevalent feelings for the moment were astonishment at the inexplicable conduct of Esau, and curiosity to know who and what he was. In serenading her in Palestine, he had indeed talked of following her o'er earth and ocean, as the shadow pursues the cloud: a pledge which he had hitherto faithfully redeemed, though for what possible object, it puzzled all her apprehensions to divine. His purposes appeared to be friendly; and yet why, since he possessed some occult means of tracking her steps, discovering her abode, and penetrating into the enclosed garden of her residence, did he never seek an interview, never introduce himself to the acquaintance of the Sagan? Nor were his powers of detecting the secret purposes of others limited to her own affairs; for he had equally fathomed the yet undeveloped machinations of Mark Antony, and instantly cautioned her against them. By his own ac-

count he was a man of blood and violence; his very looks bespoke a resolute and undaunted character: it was little compatible, however, with the former attribute, that he should devote himself to the romantic benevolence of following and endeavouring to protect an unknown female; or with the latter, that he should discharge this kind office in so covert and skulking a manner. All that appertained to him was mystery, and yet it rendered her own fate more manifest; his admonitions clearly indicated that the predictions of Nabal were about to be fulfilled, but they went beyond those ambiguous prophecies, they pointed to the specific danger, they warned her against Mark Antony; and feeling a deep conviction in her own mind that the hour of trial was at hand, it only remained that she should summon her energies to her aid, and commit herself to the protection of Heaven. To avoid the evil, if possible, would however be infinitely better

than to encounter it; and Esau's recommendation of flight coinciding perfectly with her own wishes, she resolved, immediately after the interview of the next morning, which was expected to decide the fate of the embassy, to communicate every thing that had occurred to her father and Gabriel, and to urge a secret, instant, and rapid flight from Rome. Comforted in some degree by the hope that this might yet be safely accomplished, she again commended herself most fervently to Heaven, and at length sunk to sleep.

CHAPTER IV.

IT had been settled that the Sagan and Gabriel, after their conference with Antony, should proceed to a distance of about three miles from Rome, for the purpose of inspecting a stupendous aqueduct, carried upon lofty arches over a deep valley. "These are the sights I like," said the Sagan. "Show me not the stately temples of the Pagans, for they are but the splendid shame of a hateful and besotted idolatry; nor their triumphal arches, columns, and obelisks, for they are cemented with the blood with which their insatiable ambition has inundated every quarter of the world; nor their

palaces and proud mansions, for they are but the evidences of individual luxury and pride ;— but an aqueduct, that ministers to the comfort of the pauper and the pilgrim, is the glory of its builder : it is a structure that may be contemplated without a single painful association ; wherefore it is one that I little expected to behold in Rome. Gird up your loins, Gabriel, and let us be gone ; for something whispers me that we shall have pleasant tidings from the Triumvir, and the hour approaches when he has appointed us to call upon him.”

The Sagan’s pleasant anticipations proved fallacious ; for on their arrival at Antony’s palace, they were informed, to their no small surprise and disappointment, that he had not been at home since the previous evening, nor was it known when his return might be expected. As it was possible that some public business of importance might have compelled his absence, for they had hitherto always found him punctual

in his engagements with them, they resolved to prosecute their intention of visiting the Aqueduct, and to call a second time upon their return. They accordingly again presented themselves at his gate, after an interval of several hours, without, however, being able to gain any farther intelligence respecting him, or even to obtain sight of Pyttalus, who was stated to be absent upon business. No alternative therefore remained but to return to their lodgings, which they did in a somewhat ungracious mood; for the Sagan was offended by an impunctuality which savoured of disrespect, and both were disappointed in proportion to the sanguine hopes with which they had set out in the morning.

On reaching the sitting apartment, Zillah did not present herself, as usual, to welcome their return, nor was there any reply when the Sagan called her name aloud. He proceeded to her bed-room, he traversed every chamber of their lodgings, still pronouncing her name, and still

without discovering the object of his search ; and his first surprise was quickening into a vague feeling of apprehension, when he heard the voice of Simon proceeding from the kitchen, and indicating, by its hilarious tones, that he was in a mood of unusual merriment. Thither he instantly hurried, followed by Gabriel, when, upon opening the door, they beheld the Levite reeling about the room in a state of complete intoxication, holding a wine-cup in his hand the wrong side upwards, while he half-mumbled and half-hickupped the burthen of a Bacchanalian song, which, to the additional amazement of his auditors, he thus gave in the Roman language, “ ‘ Glory to Ceres, the beautiful Chloe !—Sing Io Bacche! Evohe! Evoe !’—that’s a capital song ; but I forget all the rest on’t : better than Jonathan the Tanner’s ‘ Let us drink and sing —And merrily fling—Our bowls at the head of sorrow’—though that’s not a bad one.—Heh ! Heh ! droll fellow that Zerah ! Hick !”

“Holy Moses!” ejaculated the Sagan, “he has committed the sin of Nadab and Abihu—the man is drunken with wine.” Simon, endeavouring to steady himself, as he heard these words, bent upon his visitants his vacant, fixed, fuddled eyes, which were covered with a purplish film, till they looked like a couple of grapes; and though his master’s presence failed to restore his consciousness, it produced a bodily effect that savoured of momentary sobriety, for his relaxed limbs and muscles resumed their customary rigidity, he drew himself bolt upright, and in a loud solemn voice, as if he were officiating in the Temple, pronounced the words “Amen! Amen! Selah!” Another “Hick!” however, threw him back into his former state, his joints melted into involuntary flexibility, his features loosened into an asinine chuckle, and putting his arm around the Sagan with a maudlin fondness, he mumbled, “You’re a good fellow, Zerah, and that’s a capital song of

yours—‘ Sing Io Bacche ! Evohe ! Evoe !’ but you shan’t sneak away,—By the altar ! by the horns ! you shan’t, till we ’ve had t’other cup—So here goes ! Hick !’ In his unavailing efforts to bring the bottom of the cup to his lips, he reeled about the room, exclaiming, “ Hallo ! steady, boys, steady ! how the chairs and tables are dancing about!—that ’s the worst of being at sea, and it makes a fellow feel so cruelly qualmish :—but we shall soon reach Brun—Brun—Brun—Hch ! I forget the rest on’t.—Hick !”

“ Thou Nadab ! thou unworthy Israelite !” cried the Sagan, seizing and shaking him, “ where is my daughter ? where is Zillah ? with whom and whither has she gone ? Speak, thou shame to the Levites !”

“ Levites ! Heh ! always calling for the poor Levites !—sing to the musicians—mount guard—trim the lamps of the Temple—carry wood to the altar—draw water ; always the poor Le—Hick !”

“Drunkard!” cried Gabriel, again shaking him, “answer! where is Zillah? Heard you not the Sagan’s question?”

“It is vain to question this sot,” said the Sagan; “the wretched man is stupified with filthy wine.”

“Filthy! I like that. It was prime strong Chian, every drop. Heh! I wonder what heaven means by giving such cap—cap—capital—Hick!—to the Pagans. ‘Let us drink and sing—And merrily fling:’—Droll fellow that Jonathan the Tanner—Hick!”

“Come away, come away!” cried the Sagan, impatiently; “we lose time with this wretch: his brains are drowned; let him be locked up, and we will interrogate him when he is sober.”

“Once more I ask you,” said Gabriel, willing to make a final effort, “what has become of Zillah? whither has she gone?”

“Is he gone?” demanded Simon, fixing his grapy eye upon the wall; “is Zerah gone, and

without leaving me any more Chian ? What a shabby—Hick ! Wasn't it a good song ? ' Glory to Ceres, the beautiful Chloe,—Sing Io Bacche, Evohe ! Evoe !'" In endeavouring to bring the cup to his lips, it fell to the floor, when, after two vain attempts to pick it up, he over-reached himself, tumbled at his full length beside it, resigned himself to his drunkenness, and made no farther efforts to rise.

“Eli !” ejaculated the Sagan, “ how has this happened ? I never saw him thus before. And where is my child, my dear Zillah ? O Gabriel ! Gabriel ! my mind misgives me sadly.” His kinsman suggested that she had probably gone out with Maia, perhaps with Marcia, and that her return might be momentarily expected. But the time slipped away, the night began to close, she appeared not ; and her father’s anxiety at length becoming intolerable, he proposed that they should sally forth to make enquiries at the houses of the two females who

had been mentioned. They did so; but neither of them had seen or heard any thing of Zillah. They proceeded to the mansion of Mark Anthony, where they at length saw Pyttalus, who declared, and upon this occasion he spoke the truth, that he knew nothing respecting her, and was utterly unable to account for her disappearance; adding, that his noble patron had not yet returned from the country. Of whom to enquire next they knew not. Zillah was not in the habit of visiting or going out with any other females; and if she had sallied forth by herself—an occurrence, however, which was highly improbable—nothing but some terrible casualty could account for her absence, for no other could have prevented her, affectionate and considerate as she was, from conveying the intelligence of it to her friends. What might be the nature of the calamity in such a place as Rome, it was useless to conjecture; and yet the Sagan, after their return to their lodgings,

passed several hours in conjuring up every possible misfortune, in order that it might suggest to him some remedial course of action, for he was utterly at a loss what measures to adopt. Gabriel, in the mean time, made enquiry of the other inmates of the house, and among the neighbours, perambulating the adjoining streets, and interrogating almost every one whom he encountered, but all without effect ;—no one had seen any such female ; no one could furnish the least clue to account for her mysterious disappearance. The Sagan, who had awaited his return with those sanguine promptings of hope which are sometimes suggested by the very depth of our misery, was utterly overcome by these tidings. “ Adonoye !” he exclaimed, clasping his hands in the bitterness of his anguish—“ God is my help—none other is left to me ! If my child be not soon restored, what will remain to me, but that, like the wretched wife of Phinehas, I should eja-

culate ‘ Ichabod ! Ichabod !’ the glory is departed from me, and so lay me down and die ?”

Gabriel endeavoured to administer to him a comfort and hope which was every moment growing weaker and weaker in his own bosom.* “ Talk not to me of comfort,” cried the Sagan, waving him impatiently away with his hand ; “ My child ! my child ! restore to me my beloved Zillah, the darling of mine eyes ! give her back to mine arms, or I will listen to nothing but the voice that was heard in Ramah, Lamentation and bitter weeping ; Rachel weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted because they were not. Hist ! hark ! listen ! did I not hear a carriage stop ? No—it goes on again. Ichabod ! Ichabod ! it has passed away from me like my Zillah, who was indeed the glory of Israel !”

Thus heavily and miserably dragged on the night, the wretched father feeling that some

dreadful calamity was about to burst upon his head, investing it every moment with aggravated terrors, because its nature was undefined, catching at every sound in the street with an exquisite avidity that only terminated in renewed and embittered disappointment, and watching the approach of every carriage with a flutter and intensity of expectation that deepened the sickness and desolation of his soul when he saw it pass his door. After having walked up and down for some hours until he was almost bewildered with his misery, he declared that his suspense was too torturing to be longer endured, and seizing his staff, desired his kinsman to gird on his sword, and sally forth with him into the streets, although it was now the dead of night. Gabriel had great difficulty in dissuading him from this wild project, and yet scarcely knew what consolation to offer him; for the loss of his own daughter was brought so home to his heart by the Sagan's bereavement, that its wounds

broke open afresh, and his afflicted looks and fast-falling tears, refuting the hopes which he still affected to cherish, rendered nugatory all the words of comfort which he poured into the unlistening ear of his kinsman.

With the first dawn of day it occurred to him, that Simon might now, perhaps, be enabled to throw some light upon the disappearance of Zillah ; and they accordingly betook themselves to the room in which they had locked him up. Sleep had chased away the fumes of intoxication, and a consciousness of the excess he had committed, or rather perhaps of its detection, had saddened his countenance with a most rueful, sheepish, and chop-fallen expression. He could only recollect that Zillah was in the house when a stranger introduced himself into the kitchen, said that his name was Zerah, a Hellenised Hebrew servant settled in Rome, and that, learning the arrival of his countryman, whom he the more particularly respected as a

Levite, he had felt it his duty to call and treat him with some Chian wine, which he had brought with him in a flask for the purpose. "It was not the wine," said Simon, "for I remembered too well the proverb of Solomon—'Wine is a mocker; strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise;—but I thought you would be offended if I offered any courtesy to a brother Hebrew, and one, moreover, who respects the Levites, and so I tasted of his cup of devils, and lo! after a little while, the earth itself began to reel to and fro like a drunkard." Having thus satisfactorily proved that the earth was in fault more than himself, and that if he had erred at all, it was entirely from a fear of offending the Sagan, Simon admitted that he could give no farther account of Zillah, and confessed that he knew nothing of what had subsequently occurred in the house.

"It is a plot, a plot, a manifest plot!" ex-

claimed the Sagan, in a tone of anguish: “ the guard was to be intoxicated in order that the treasure might be carried off, and no one know whither. Ichabod ! Ichabod ! the glory is departed from me for ever !”

Simon no sooner understood that he had been the dupe of a stratagem which had terminated in the abduction of Zillah, and the desolation of her relatives, than shame, penitence, and indignation took possession of his soul ; and as if eager to make atonement for his deep offence, he grasped his sword, declaring, with a fierce look, that if the Sagan would only point out his path, he would cut his way through a hundred enemies, and bring her back, even were she tied to the horns of the Pagan altar of Jupiter.

“ Woe ! woe !” cried the afflicted father : “ I set thee over her as a watcher and a holy one, and thou hast suffered the Tabernacle to be rifled, and the Ark to be carried off by the Philistines. The plague of emerods be upon thee !

What boots it now to offer me thy sword ? She has fallen into the snare, and we neither know who is the fowler, nor in what quarter he hath set his nets."

When the hour of public business arrived, Gabriel and the Sagan betook themselves to a magistrate, to make a deposition of their loss, and to ask advice how they should act ; but he could furnish them no clue, no consolation, no counsel beyond that of offering a reward for her recovery ; and they returned to their dwelling in a deeper despondency than ever. Here, however, they had not long remained when Felix made his appearance, and, running up to the Sagan, expressed the greatest surprise and pleasure at seeing him, as he had understood that he was lying seriously indisposed at a few miles distance from Rome. In explanation of this strange statement he declared, that on the previous day, a momentary stoppage of carriages having occurred in the streets, he had been sur-

prised at recognizing Zillah in one of them, who informed him, with looks of the greatest grief and agitation, that her father having been taken suddenly ill, while inspecting an aqueduct at some distance from Rome, had sent for her that she might join him at a neighbouring inn, whither he had been carried, until he should be sufficiently recovered to return home. “ I promised to call early on the following morning,” said Felix, “ to make enquiry concerning your health, and I was about to offer to your daughter my immediate services, when the carriage suddenly drove off, and I saw her no more.”

“ Ichabod ! Ichabod !” reiterated the Sagan, in a tone of the deepest anguish—“ I said it was a plot ; it is palpable, glaring as the full moon. I am a miserable old man ; and what have I to do, but, like Job after his children were destroyed, to curse the hour of my birth and die. But tell me, good Felix, did you recognize the carriage ? was there no one with her ?”

“ The carriage I had never seen before ; but to my surprise there was a priest of Cybele within it, one whom I believe to be of doubtful character, and not the less so that I have often seen him in the company of Mark Antony.”

“ Of Mark Antony !” shouted the Sagan, sharply smiting his thigh with his right hand—“ of Mark Antony !” and he repeated the blow. “ It is divulged ! disclosed ! revealed ! O my prophetical heart ! it ever whispered this to me, and yet, like a coward, I feared to listen to it. It was ever prompting me to go to this accursed Pagan, this neighing horse of Darius, and say to him, as Nathan said to David when he had stolen Bathsheba, ‘ Thou art the man !’ Come ! quick, quick ! we will no longer tarry : give me my staff ; gird on your swords, good Gabriel and Simon ; we will assault this Belial, even in his own temple, and at the sacred Hebrew cry of Jehovah-nissi, The Lord is my banner, its walls shall tumble down, as did those of Jeri-

cho at the sounding of the ram's horns." It was a relief to the Sagan that his calamity had assumed a definite form ; that his wrongs were traceable to a known individual, and his indignant rage was even powerful enough for the moment to supersede his grief. His eyes flashed, his veins swelled, his beard quivered, he snarled with very fury as he grasped his weapon, sprung the dagger at its extremity, and prepared to lead his two poor followers to the assault of Antony's strong and stately mansion.

Felix himself was as deeply afflicted as the bereaved and raving father. His knowledge of Antony's libidinous, dissolute character led him at once to the conclusion, that he had been the author of Zillah's abduction ; and the thought of the outrages to which she might at that very moment be exposed, together with the difficulty, perhaps the impossibility of rescuing her from the clutches of so powerful and unrelenting an adversary, smote upon his heart

with a withering pang of anguish, which revealed to him, for the first time, the depth and the intensity of his love. Any such frantic scheme, however, as that proposed by the Sagan, he well knew to be much better calculated to defeat than to advance his object, since Antony was not a man to be intimidated by blustering wrath, or the gleaming of a few brandished swords. Imploring his Hebrew friends, therefore, not to rush upon any act of desperation, but to command their passions until his return, he promised to hasten to his uncle Sosius, the general, one of Antony's oldest, most valued, and most influential friends, by whose interference he pledged himself to learn, within an hour or two, whether or not their suspicions were well founded ; adding, that if Antony had really been guilty of this atrocity, he would allow his uncle no respite until he had persuaded the Triumvir to forego his infamous purpose, and restore Zillah to her

friends ; in default of which he would himself liberate her by force, or perish in the attempt.

So saying, he hastened away ; but it were as easy to hush the tempestuous billows by singing to them a lullaby, as to allay the boiling blood of the Sagan by giving him counsel of gentleness, or even of temporary forbearance. In his distrust of the Pagans, which was rendered more sweeping and undistinguishing than ever by this enormity, he imagined that Felix himself might be a party to the plot, and paying therefore little attention to his assurances, he called upon Gabriel and Simon to follow him ; and the infuriated trio, sallying forth with brandished weapons, hurried through the streets, made their way to Antony's door, and with angry cries and gestures demanded instant admittance. With such an alarming summons the porter, very naturally, refused to comply, when Simon, anxious to redeem his credit with his master, by taking the lead in the

affray, sprang forward, and wounded him with his sword. The man cried out for assistance ; a dozen armed retainers rushed from the building. Simon, after a fierce resistance, was surrounded, made prisoner, and dragged into the lodge ; the Sagan and Gabriel were disarmed, and warned to retire instantly, if they wished to avoid sharing his fate ; when the partisans of Antony returned into the Atrium, and the gates were again closed.

Utterly astounded at his own helplessness, and this rapid demolition of all his hopes, the Sagan's impotent fury was succeeded by a burst of grief, to which he abandoned himself with all the ungovernable vehemence that ever distinguished the passionate transports of the Hebrews. Throwing himself upon the ground, while the tears gushed from his eyes, he grovelled in the dust, scattered it upon his head, tore his hair and beard, rent his garments, and with groans and cries imprecated a thousand

curses upon the despoiler who had robbed him of his child. Compassionating his almost delirious agony, a passenger whispered to him, that if he had been wronged by Mark Antony, his only chance of redress consisted in an appeal to the Senate. At these words a new ray of hope seemed to dart athwart his mind. He started upon his feet, and crying out to Gabriel, “To the Senate! To the Senate!” rushed through the streets, in the direction of the house in which they were then assembled.

Never, perhaps, had that august body been startled by a more appalling apparition than when the Sagan, thrusting aside the officers and doorkeepers, burst suddenly into the very midst of their assemblage, his hair and beard wildly dishevelled, his garments torn, his face disfigured with dust, through which the tears had washed themselves a channel, his looks and gestures exhibiting all the passionate grief of a maniac. “Hear me, Romans!” he exclaimed,

in a voice rendered hoarse by his emotions :
“ Ye call yourselves Conscrip Fathers—’tis as such that I appeal to you,—and more especially to such of you as have daughters, for ye know not how soon my wrongs and miseries may be your own. Mark Antony,—he whom you have set in authority over you, and chosen him as your Triumvir, has robbed me of my daughter, of a virgin of Israel ; and I denounce him to you as a villain, and a ravisher. Ye are the descendants of the same Romans who dethroned and expelled the Tarquins for the indignity perpetrated upon Lucretia ; who abolished the Decemvirs for the insult offered to Virginia ; and I demand of you the punishment of the not less infamous and guilty Antony, and the restoration of my ~~my~~ abducted daughter.”

The Senators were actually aghast with terror at such audacious language ; for the recollection of the recent proscriptions and massacres committed by the Triumvirate, made them

shudder at the thought of irritating the violent Antony, whom, had they not been paralysed by sudden amazement, they would never have allowed to be thus publicly and insultingly arraigned. No sooner, however, had one of the Consuls recollected himself, than he called out with an angry voice, “Lictors and officers ! why have ye dared to neglect your duty in suffering this brawling maniac to insult us with his ravings ? Seize the frantic wretch, and thrust him forth into the street.”

“ You must be gone quickly from the Hall,” said one of the Lictors, laying his hands upon the Sagan ;—“ we listen not here to complaints against the illustrious Mark Antony : he is master of every thing in Rome, and there is no redress for you.”

“ Thou liest, Pagan !” passionately shouted the Sagan :—“ if not on earth, there is at least redress in Heaven ;” and suddenly throwing himself upon his knees, while he lifted his

clasped and trembling hands above his head, and upturned his streaming eyes, he solemnly exclaimed in the Hebrew language, "O thou Almighty, future, present, and past, great JEHOVAH ! Thou who threshest the mountains and beatest them small—who breakest the heads of whales in the deep waters—whose chariot of war is the earth-darkening cloud, whose spear the lightning, and whose battle-shout the thunder, hear thy servant—hear me for thy beloved Abraham's sake, for thy faithful Isaac's sake, and for thy holy Israel's sake ! Have pity upon a pious virgin of Jerusalem. Deliver my daughter, the delight of my heart, from the power of the dog ! rescue my darling from the lions ! Let not the ravisher triumph in his iniquity—suffer not a Pagan, an idolater, to pluck away a daughter of thy chosen people ! Bow down thy heavens, and come forth, O Lord ! Stretch out thy red right hand—seize him even on the throne of his guilt—heave him

towards the sky as a terrible warning—wave him towards the four quarters of the earth as an appalling evidence of wrath; and then with thy avenging sword smite him and break his cheek-bone, so that he shall neither bite nor ask for mercy—cleave his reins, spill his gall upon the ground, rend the caul of his heart—let the young ravens pick out his eyes, let the feet and the tongues of dogs be red with his blood, and may his skull be rolled into the dark corner of a cave, as a plaything for the lion's cub!"

Although they understood not this terrible malediction, multitudes of the senators now rose from their seats, calling to their officers with loud and angry cries, to drag out the barbarian who thus insolently disturbed their proceedings; when the half-distracted Sagan, as the Lictors were hauling him forth, retorted upon the clamourers with a new fury,—“Cowards! slaves! abject degenerate Romans! the

curse of a childless father fall upon your heads, and wither up your hearts! May your rulers share the fate of Phinehas and Hophni, the abusers of the women assembled in the courts of the Tabernacle! May ye be cut off with the edge of the sword, like the base Shechemites, who supported their prince in the rape of Dinah! May your proud city, like the accursed and fire-devoted towns of the Canaanites——” His voice, which in his vehement ravings had already broken into hoarseness, now choked in his throat; he coughed, struggled violently, and, just as he reached the vestibule, the unfortunate Sagan, overcome by the combined effects of sleeplessness, inanition, and passionate emotions, fell senseless into the arms of Gabriel. By the assistance of some humane bystanders he was conveyed to a coach, and Gabriel, tortured at once by the recollection of his own loss, and the miserable plight of his kinsman, accompanied him home. It was an

inexpressible relief to him when the motion of the carriage gradually revived the sufferer, who had now become calm from mere exhaustion, and, appearing to be comparatively resigned to his fate, suffered himself to be assisted into the house, and placed in an arm chair, without uttering a syllable. To the no small surprise of Gabriel, Simon presently made his appearance, stating that, after a short confinement, he had been liberated by the interference of Pyttalus, who had restored the captured arms, and charged him with a message to the Sagan, counselling his immediate flight from Rome, since Antony, after such a public and unatontable insult, would be sure to pursue him with his vengeance—a vengeance, Pyttalus had emphatically added, which never spared the lives of those who once came within its grasp.

“The villain ! the Pagan robber !” exclaimed Gabriel. “What ! would he swindle us out of our jewels, and then bid us be gone from Rome !

Let him restore to us our precious carbuncles and rubies, our pearls, sapphires, jacinths, and sardonyxes, our chrysoprasus, jasper, and chrysolite, or I will not stir a foot."

" Let him but restore to me the jewel beyond all price; my darling Zillah," said the Sagan, raising himself in his chair and speaking in a faint voice; " and I will willingly fly from this Pagan city of desolation. But without my child I will never quit its walls. Let him wreak his vengeance; let him heap coals of fire upon my head; I will sit in the dust, I will eat ashes, I will endure mockery and torments, and patiently await my death, but I will not—I will not—I will not stir from Rome without my Zillah." Exhausted by the effort of speaking, he gave a deep groan, and again sunk back into his chair. Simon now quitted the apartment; and Gabriel, unable to suggest any subject of hope or consolation to his afflicted kinsman, could only remind him of

the patience of Job under much greater trials, and counsel a similar resignation to the will of Heaven. But the old man was inconsolable ; he waved his hand and shook his head impatiently, as if determined not to listen to any words of comfort.—“ Forbear, forbear !” he exclaimed.—“ Now may I say in imitation of Naomi—call me not Malachi, which signifieth Angel of the Lord, but rather Marah, for the Lord hath dealt bitterly with me ; or Havilah, for I am a prey to heavy grieving ; or Israel, for my soul is filled with struggling. Talk not to me, Gabriel—I will not quit this Beth-jeshimoth, this house of desolation. Bring me sackcloth and ashes, and let me gird myself with a cord, for here will I cast myself upon the ground and die.”

“ I speak it not reproachfully, but in sorrow,” said Gabriel, “ when I ask in the words of Eliphaz to Job—are the consolations of God small to thee ?”

“ My child ! my child ! give me my dear daughter, or hold thy peace.”

“ Remember that Abraham never abandoned hope, even when——”

“ Peace ! peace ! talk not to a deaf man—leave me to my own miserable thoughts.”

Seeing that his kinsman was too much overwhelmed with grief to listen to the words of comfort, Gabriel ceased speaking ; and a mournful silence, only interrupted by an occasional heavy groan, had now lasted for a considerable time, when loud outcries were heard in the passage, the door was violently forced open, and Simon again burst into the room, struggling furiously with a vulgar-looking stranger, whom he at length succeeded in hurling to the ground, and, throwing himself heavily upon his body, pinioned his arms to the floor, loudly and hoarsely loading him at the same time with every abusive term that the Hebrew vocabulary could supply.

CHAPTER V.

IN his infamous designs upon Zillah, circumstances, which it is unnecessary to detail, had determined **Mark Antony** not to employ Pyttalus, the usual agent of his irregular amours, but a priest of Cybele, a man of abandoned character, and one whom he considered less likely perhaps to stickle at those violent measures which the courageous mind and exalted purity of his intended victim might render ultimately necessary. Though **Mark Antony** was all but despotic in the present degraded state of Rome, and might have perpetrated any outrage by a mere act of arbitrary power, it

was not his interest to incur any avoidable unpopularity, when a rupture with his rival might necessitate an early appeal to public opinion ; and he therefore instructed the priest to carry off Zillah in such a manner as to elude, if possible, all immediate observation, and consequently all subsequent pursuit. To effect this purpose, the wary pander had employed a Hellenized Jew to intoxicate Simon in the manner described ; and when he had ascertained that the Levite had lost all consciousness, the priest suddenly hurried into Zillah's apartment, informing her that her father had been attacked with a paralytic stroke while inspecting the Aqueduct, and that his kinsman Gabriel, being afraid to leave him, desired the immediate attendance of Zillah to pacify the mind of her parent, who was perpetually calling upon her name. The sufferer, he stated, had been conveyed to an inn in the vicinity of the Temple to which he himself belonged ; adding, that

having hastened to the spot with some cordials, as soon as he had learnt the accident, he had offered to convey the painful tidings to Zillah, and to escort her back to her sick parent,—a proposition which had been thankfully accepted, and which he accordingly came to execute.

Anguish and alarm upon her father's account were for the moment so paramount in the agitated mind of Zillah, as completely to absorb every other feeling; nor, had she paused to weigh the relation she had just heard, a process which never suggested itself to her unsuspecting nature, could she have possibly been visited by any misgivings, probable as the statement was in itself, and corroborated by such circumstantial details. That the Sagan had intended inspecting the Aqueduct, she already knew, as also that he was occasionally liable to slight attacks of paralysis; while her habitual reverence for the ministers of religion, extending itself even to Pagan priests, would never allow her to

believe that they could lend themselves to any measures of fraud, falsehood, and atrocity. Without a moment's hesitation, therefore, she committed herself to the guidance of her insidious visitant ; and, hastily throwing on a walking-dress, while she ejaculated a momentary prayer for her parent's recovery, she hurried out of the house. As this occurred in the middle of the day, while the street was thronged with passengers, their exit was unobserved ; they shortly afterwards entered a carriage which had been stationed for the purpose at a little distance ; and, but for the accidental encounter with Felix, the wily priest would have executed his commission with all the secrecy that had been enjoined, and with more, probably, than had been anticipated, either by himself or his employer.

“Alas !” exclaimed Zillah, as they drove along, “my poor father has long been subject to slight attacks of this nature, from his stand-

ing barefoot upon the cold marble of the Temple,—a practice which few can endure with impunity, who have not been habituated to it from their youth upwards; and I have often dreaded the more alarming seizure with which he has now been afflicted. But what remedies have you applied, and why was he not brought back to Rome?"

The priest having effectually secured his prize, and not wishing to agitate her feelings beyond the degree that was essential to his purpose, assured her that although her parent was not in a condition to be immediately removed, every thing had been administered that could tend to his immediate relief, and there was little doubt that he would speedily be in a situation to return home.

"How our driver loiters!" said Zillah, in her affectionate impatience: "I know that my dear father is impetuous, choleric at times if his wishes be not gratified; and I dread lest the

delay of my arrival should aggravate his symptoms, by irritating his temper."

" Nay, if you desire it, we will accelerate our pace, by all means." There was a sarcasm in the tone of this speech, and a sneer in its accompanying smile, which might have awakened some mistrust in her mind, had not its faculties been so completely engrossed by apprehensions for her father's safety, and anxiety to join him. Nor did it excite her alarm, when she observed that they were in the country ; for she had heard Gabriel mention, that the spot they were to visit was two or three miles from Rome ;—but when it appeared to her that they had considerably exceeded this distance, when the scenery became rugged and lonesome, and, upon gazing around, she could discern no traces of the Aqueduct, a sudden flash of doubt shot athwart her mind, and she demanded an explanation of her companion in accents of imperative eagerness,

that seemed to say she would not brook any longer silence or equivocation.

“ We have just reached the end of our journey,” replied the priest, with an insulting indifference, for he now knew that his machinations had completely succeeded; “ yonder is our Temple; the Aqueduct, which you cannot yet see, crosses the valley behind it.”

The Temple of Cybele to which he pointed, one of the most ancient structures in the vicinity of Rome, and suffering apparently from dilapidation and neglect, as much as from the assaults of time, was situated in a sandy rocky soil, sequestered from every other habitation, and surrounded by aged oaks and fir-trees, several of which were quite dead from excessive antiquity, while all were more or less bald, withered, and decayed; a state in which they did but the more mournfully and appropriately harmonize with the forlorn, desolate character

of the building. It was low, and had been originally massive, but one of the rude columns in its front having given way, the crumbling pediment was toppling to its fall; the walls having been found inadequate to the support of the heavy roof, it had been removed at some former period, and a covering of thatch substituted, which was overgrown with lichens and wild flowers; while the whole edifice was so darkened with the breath of ages, so tinted with weather-stains, so choked around with rank weeds and a little wilderness of shrubs, that it might rather seem some old deserted barn, than a Temple of the wife of Saturn. Nature, in fact, long left to her own luxuriance, had been silently asserting her reign, until she had partly triumphed over the work of Art, the columns and walls being mantled with ivy, and the roof with moss, so that the entire mass had almost assumed a vegetable appearance,—an evidence of neglect which sufficiently attested the deserted

state of the fane. Newer and more stately structures within the walls of Rome had supplanted it; the worshippers had fled; and the profligate priests, in order to eke out their scanty revenues, had converted it into a house of accommodation for such of the Roman libertines as had willing beauties whom they wished to meet in secrecy, or refractory ones whom they resolved to intimidate and subdue,—in which latter capacity it was now intended to be employed by Mark Antony.

A few old ragged goats, which had been nibbling the scanty herbage on the shady side of the building, ceased browsing as Zillah approached, and gazed at the vehicle with wild looks; a solitary vulture, poised on the topmost dead bough of one of the oaks, uttered a doleful scream, but moved not from her perch; while the kites and ravens, that were flapping heavily from one tree to another, filled the air with harsh discordant croakings,—an ominous greet-

ing, which seemed to confirm the dark forebodings that had already begun to agitate the bosom of Zillah, and determined her to make an instant attempt at extrication, before she was beyond all possibility of escape. The recollection of Esau's midnight warning, and the horrid thought that she had perhaps been decoyed from home, only to be placed within the clutches of Mark Antony, now flashing like lightning athwart her mind, corroborated her resolution, and she screamed out to the driver, commanding him to stop instantly. Instead of obeying this mandate, the man drove more rapidly than before; when Zillah placed her hand upon the door, intending to leap out of the vehicle, notwithstanding the velocity with which it was proceeding,—a purpose, however, which was perceived, and immediately prevented by her companion, who forcibly held her in her seat. “Unhand me, ruffian!” she exclaimed, struggling violently; “dare you thus

detain a free-born daughter of Jerusalem against her will? Are you a priest, and can you lend yourself to this atrocious outrage? Whither are you carrying me? What wild and savage place is this? Where is the inn? Where is my dear father? I will go no farther. Stop! stop!—help! help!"

She screamed with all her force, and the motion of the carriage at length suddenly ceased, for they had now reached the back entrance to the Temple.

Casting a quick and shuddering glance at the door, Zillah beheld four tall beardless men, whose sleek, effeminate looks and priestly garments banished from their appearance all that ruffianism by which more manly desperadoes are generally characterized, although the cold, cruel smile upon their passionless faces gave but too much reason to suspect that their hearts, inured to this odious and cruel office, were utterly callous to the appeals of suffering

beauty, insensible to the most melting supplications of female agony.

“I will not quit the carriage—I will never at least enter this building,” said Zillah, assuming a forced composure, “unless I know where I am, and why I am brought hither.”—“We have had many refractory damsels at our gate, who have said the same,” observed her companion; “and this is the way in which we have always prevented them from keeping their word.” So saying, he laid hands upon her, his fellow priests assisted, and they proceeded to drag her from the vehicle by main force. Struggling against the indignity thus offered to her, the unfortunate Zillah again shrieked aloud for help. “You may spare your cries,” said the leader of the priestly gang; “they will be heard by none in this solitude, unless by the goats that belong to the Temple, or the rooks and ravens that haunt the trees. You, Septimus and Piso ! secure her other arm ; the

young barbarian has the strength of Milo. So, now let us bear her forward."

Forced from the carriage, and unable to offer any effectual resistance, Zillah was borne into the building, and deposited in a chair; when the perpetrators of the outrage withdrew, not, however, until they had again assured her that her outcries would be unavailing, and that she might as well submit quietly to a fate which had befallen prouder and more scornful beauties than herself, and which was at all events utterly inevitable. When she had a little recovered from the first burst of her indignant agitation, Zillah took a rapid survey of the apartment, or the prison, as she might now term it, wherein she was immured. It was a square chamber, of which the stone-walls had been once painted with rude figures, representing a procession of the wild Corybantes, with their drums and tabrets, spears and bucklers; but many were effaced by time, and the few gaunt processionists

that remained, showed dim and discoloured, like spectres of the olden times. There was but one small window to the room, which was near the ceiling, and secured with iron-bars; while the door, which she had heard carefully locked and bolted on the outside, was of solid oak studded with large nails. From such a place of confinement there was no chance of escape; but while this primary object had been strictly attended to, the comfort of its unhappy inmate had not been altogether neglected. The floor was thickly strewed with dried reeds, there were chairs and a table in the room, and on the stone slab of a small recess had been placed some viands, not inelegantly displayed, together with two drinking-horns and a flask of wine.

After this brief survey of her prison, Zillah endeavoured to collect her scattered thoughts, to commune with herself, and to perpend what probable fate she had to expect,—what mode of

action, if any, would be the most likely to evade it. Prayer she had ever been instructed to consider her best resource in moments of tribulation or imminent jeopardy, and she therefore addressed herself to Heaven for protection with a fervour commensurate with the urgency of her need, and the apparent hopelessness of all other succour. Somewhat tranquillized by this act, she could review the occurrence of the morning with a comparative degree of calmness ; and bitterly, most bitterly did she at first accuse herself for the precipitation, the blindness with which she had plunged into the snare, so immediately after the express warning she had received from her midnight monitor, and in defiance of the secret promptings of her own heart, which had ever whispered her to beware of Mark Antony and his open violence or treacherous machinations. And yet, when she reflected that her indiscretion had sprung from her affectionate impetuosity, from her intense

anxiety on account of her beloved father, she could hardly, upon more deliberate consideration, condemn herself for so natural and venial an error. In the midst of her afflictions it was some consolation to hope, that the whole statement of her father's alarming seizure was a villainous invention; in which cheering thought she was encouraged to look her own dangers more boldly in the face, and even to cherish the expectation, that if all human aid were unavailing; she might be rescued by the same Divine hand which had effected the manifold deliverances recorded in almost every page of the Jewish sacred history.

While she was recalling these instances to her memory, she heard the neighing of horses without, followed by the bustle of footsteps within the building, and the sound of voices in eager conversation; shortly after which the door of her prison was opened, when Mark Antony walked in, and again closed it behind him!—

“ So ! my stately ox-eyed Juno !” he exclaimed, throwing himself into one of the chairs, and measuring her figure with a derisive triumphant smile : “ So, my Callipyges ! have we caught your proud goddess-ship in the toils ? Or, if you disclaim these Pagan honours, if you are not she for whom I mistook you, shall I address you as a pious Hebrew maiden, the daughter of the Sagan of Jerusalem,—she, whose ears were never again to be polluted by the liberal overtures of Mark Antony, but who must be now fain to consider herself his prisoner, and stoop to solicit favours, instead of being implored to grant them ?”

Indignant as Zillah was at this insulting allusion to their previous interview, her filial anxiety overcoming every other feeling, she eagerly exclaimed, “ I do, I do stoop to solicit favours ; I do implore you to tell me whether my dear father be indeed so dangerously ill as was represented to me ?”

“ Was that the decoy that lured the silly bird to the net ? ” enquired Antony, with a laugh : “ Why, then, most beautiful and tempting dupe, discard your fears, for I believe the worthy Sagan to be in perfect health.”

“ I thank thee, Heaven, for this ! ” ejaculated Zillah, throwing herself upon her knees ; “ it will the better enable me to bear my own trials.”

“ Why, ay, this is as it should be,” exclaimed Mark Antony. “ By Cupid and his mother ! it is pleasant to see the scornful beauty, who flouted me with such insulting looks and language, thus kneeling at my feet.”

“ Not at thy feet, base and audacious Pagan ! ” cried Zillah, starting up ; “ Never, never shall a daughter of Israel be thus degraded ! I treated thee with scorn before, because I only loathed thy person, and abhorred thy principles ; but false, treacherous, and cowardly as thou hast now proved thyself to be, I despise thee, if possible, ten thousand times more than ever ! ”

“ This is the abusive courage of anger, not of fortitude. Reserve it for your calmer moments, when, I suspect, you will have greater need of it ; and yet I cannot quarrel with you for a resentment which so admirably heightens your beauty. By Venus Callipyges ! I never knew a female to whom rage was so becoming. But listen to me, Zillah, seriously and collectedly, if you can ; for your fate is involved in what I shall utter. I came not here to pay you compliments, nor to hear your fiery declamation, nor to waste time in idle colloquies, but to impart to you my irrevocable determinations, upon which I shall leave you till to-morrow morning to decide ; for your mind is at present in too agitated a state to allow your reason and reflection fair play, and I will not resort to extremities unless you compel me.” He then repeated to her his former proposition, offering to make a treaty of friendship with her nation, and to elevate herself to almost any dignity she

might choose, if she would consent to his wishes, and accompany him to his government in the East. “ Nay, nay !” he continued, “ hush these passionate invectives ; spare yourself this indignant rejection of my suit ; hear me out : mark well the alternative, and prepare to encounter it—if you dare. Should I find, when I return in the morning, that you still prove refractory, I shall force you to my will. No human means can prevent me—you are here beyond the reach of succour—the tenants of the Temple are the minions of my pleasures,—and, above all, remember that it is Mark Antony who is talking to you—Mark Antony, whom opposition may irritate, but whom it was never known to subdue ! You would be secure enough in this chamber ; but that you may be in still safer custody, and less liable to be interrupted in your reflections, behold ! where you are to pass the night !”

He kicked aside the rushes with which the

floor was thickly strewed, when an iron-grating revealed to Zillah a narrow flight of stone steps, leading down to a subterranean vault, of which the darkness prevented her discovering the depth or the extent. “We have dungeons of this sort in Rome,” he continued, “for Vestals who have broken their vow; and others, as you see, for stubborn virgins, who contumaciously refuse to surrender when Mark Antony condescends to solicit their favours. I have done, I have said—I will listen to no bursts of passion, no whining appeals—I never suffer myself to be trifled with: expect me to-morrow morning; till when I leave you to your meditations.” His tone and countenance, as he concluded this speech, and quitted the apartment, indicated the calm, stern inflexibility of one who had made up his mind to a desperate purpose, and was resolved to abide by it, whatever might be the consequence.

Overcome by conflicting emotions, Zillah re-

mained for some time with her clasped hands lying in her lap, and her eyes fixed upon the floor in a bewildered stupor, from which she was aroused by the re-appearance of the priests, led by the one who had decoyed her from her home. The sight of this wretch, and the conviction of the perilous predicament into which he had so basely trepanned her, rekindling her dormant energies, she upbraided him in vehement and bitter terms for his baseness, cowardice, and perfidy; but the object of her invectives did but smile at her impotent anger; and Zillah herself, as if suddenly recollecting the utter ~~in~~utility of exasperating him, fell upon her knees, and implored him, by every consideration of honour and humanity, not to expose her to the brutal violence of Mark Antony, but to make atonement for the wrongs he had already done her, by saving her from farther indignity. Passionate and powerful as was her appeal, it failed to penetrate the

heartless creature to whom it was addressed. “Thou silly young barbarian!” he replied, with a leering smile; “in another week, when thou hast learned to be compliant, and hast known the love and the generosity of Mark Antony, thou wilt thank me for the part I have acted; nor wilt thou be the first who hast entered the Temple of Cybele with tears and outcries, and quitted it with joy and laughter. In the mean while, we must obey our orders; we must coerce you to your own happiness, and consign you to the darkness of these vaults, until you spontaneously call for the torch of Cupid to light you out again. By the time your lover arrives to-morrow morning, I dare say, there will be no necessity for violence. Where is this sluggish porter with the key? What ho! Bambo! Bambo!”—An interval elapsed during which the same speaker reminded Zillah that resistance or clamour, though they might exhaust herself, and disturb his

own slumbers and those of his brother priests, would be totally unavailing, on which account he counselled her to submit to her doom, if not with resignation, at least with quietness.—By this time Bambo made his appearance ; an ancient cripple, with a bunch of keys at his girdle, and a countenance which, in spite of the chastening touches of age, seemed to have lost nothing of its originally villainous expression.

“ Have you prepared the vault according to my orders ?” enquired the priest. “ Have you put a mattress on the couch, so that the lady may pass the night in comfort ?”

“ Ay, ay ; comfortable enough, I warrant. She may sleep as sound, if she likes, as some of those who have taken a nap in the same quarters, and have never awoke again.”

“ Dotard and cripple ! hold thy babbling tongue !” angrily exclaimed the priest.

“ Dotard and cripple I may be,” replied Bambo, with a malicious scowl ; “ but I am, at

least, a man ;” and his features relaxed into a chuckle, while he jerked his body with a grunting laugh, as if in triumph at the rejoinder.

“ Villain !” cried the enraged priest, “ search out the key, and unlock the grating.”

“ Villain ?” mumbled Bambo, while he put the key into the padlock—“ Ay, there, I believe, we are pretty much the same.” The grating was now folded back, creaking ominously on its hinges ; and Zillah, reflecting that by an apparent acquiescence she might, perhaps, obtain some little indulgence or delay, while resistance would be manifestly unavailing, suffered herself to be quietly led down the steps into the vault beneath, which was furnished with a chair, and a stone-table, besides the couch. The refreshments, which had been deposited in the chamber above, were brought down, and placed upon the table in the vault ; a warm quilt was thrown over the couch ; and the head priest, having again recommended to Zillah not

to give way to an intemperate grief, which would only injure her beauty, without benefiting her cause, withdrew with his companions. The grating was closed over her head, Bambo secured the padlock; and the whole party quitting the chamber above, bolted and locked that door also, leaving their unfortunate victim to solitude, silence, and her own melancholy reflections.

These, as it will easily be supposed, were of a sufficiently desponding nature; and yet they did not amount to absolute despair—for what prisoner ever abandoned all hope of escape? As the reeds had not been replaced over the grating, a scanty light penetrated into the dungeon, insufficient to disclose its full extent; though this was circumscribed, for on feeling around the walls, she ascertained that it was of the same dimensions as the chamber above. There was a door, however, on one side, upon pressing against which she found that it was

open,—a discovery which made her heart thrill with expectation, however improbable that it would have been left unsecured if it could have afforded her the smallest chance of escape. Determined to leave nothing unexplored, she pushed it back ; the pitchy darkness prevented her from discerning a single object before her, but, from the cool chill air that blew upon her, she conjectured the interior vaults to be of some extent, and upon putting forth her foot, she found that another flight of steps led down to them. Placing the chair against the door, so as to keep it open, she resolutely began to descend, with the intention of traversing and examining these lower dungeons, whithersoever they might conduct her ; but, after a few steps, her heart sunk within her, and her resolution failed, for she recollect ed the dark insinuation of Bambo, that many had gone to sleep in these gloomy caverns who had never again seen the light of day, and she dreaded lest she should

either fall herself into some devilish contrivance laid for her destruction, or stumble over the remains of those former victims to whom such an appalling allusion had been made. Esau's recent warning, that snares and pitfalls would be set for her, flashed also upon her agitated thoughts; and shuddering all over, partly from the effect of the cold air, but more from the suggestion of the horrors with which she imagined herself to be environed, she hastily retraced her steps, again closed the door, and threw herself, in a pitiable state of misery, upon the couch.

“Alas!” she exclaimed, after a momentary pause, “what avails it that this mysterious Esau haunts me wherever I go, and stealing like a spy upon my midnight-hours, harasses my heart with his obscure admonitions? Away with such ambiguous friendship! If he knew that this calamity was impending over my head, why did he not define its nature, so that I

might have been enabled to avoid it? why does he not now come forward to the rescue, now that I am encompassed about with dangers, and have fallen into the pit that mine enemies have digged? Would the bold, the generous, the single-hearted Felix have contented himself with such timid hints, had he suspected that I was beset with traps? or would he have thus abandoned me to my fate? Oh, no, no, no! he would now rush to save me, and, if his life could effect my deliverance, I should not be in this cruel and fearful bondage. Oh, Nabal! Nabal! your predictions are but too dismally verified: troubles and sore ~~trials~~ oppress my very soul: I am in a lion's den filled with ravine, and there is none to help me! And who shall comfort thee, my father; my dear, dear father, when I am plucked away from thee?—when I am dead, perchance, and thou knowest it not; when thou shalt call in bitter anguish upon my name, and there shall be

none to——” Zillah had hitherto borne up with some fortitude against the enumeration of her own woes and perils, but when she adverted to the probable grief of her bereaved parent, doting, as he did, upon his child, and little able to command his emotions under much less trying afflictions, the bare imagination of his agony instantly overcame her, her tongue refused utterance to her words, she gave an hysterical sob, and burst into a passionate gush of tears.

Again addressing her supplications to Heaven, she prayed long and earnestly, and arose from her kneeling posture with a confidence and courage which she flattered herself would continue to support her, whatever might be the extremities to which she should be exposed. In this cheering belief she was disappointed ; for as the night advanced, and she became gradually involved in total darkness, her fears

and misgivings returned ; and in the hopelessness of succour, for she saw not from what quarter it could possibly reach her, she gradually sunk into a despondency that might almost be termed despair. To this prostration of mind her bodily exhaustion contributed, while every thought that agitated her soul, every sound that met her ear as the midnight approached, was calculated to aggravate it. A fearful storm had arisen, and the wind now howled mournfully around the building, and now died away into a wailful whistle ; while in the intervals of its fitful gusts the vulture screamed sharp and loud, and the ravens, disturbed in their nest, croaked with an angry and a boding clamour. Amid such ominous alarums sleep would have been impossible, even had her mental anguish allowed it ; and seating herself upon the couch, she listened for some time to the furious elements, and these sounds of evil au-

gury, wishing the doleful hours to pass away, and yet conscious that their lapse would only accelerate the crisis of her fate.

In this disconsolate plight, abandoned to the melancholy associations that surrounded her, clinging to every vain surmise, forced after a moment's consideration to surrender each delusive hope as it sprang up, and sinking hourly into a deeper dismay, she suddenly heard a violent knocking at one of the doors of the building, followed by loud shouts and cries sounding from without; and a flash of joyous expectation shot like lightning through her mind. “They are come! they are come!” she shouted, starting up from the couch: “the succourers hasten to the rescue! It is my beloved father, with the valiant Gabriel and Simon, who will not suffer their turtle-dove to be torn to pieces by the eagle! It is the valorous and gentle Felix, perchance, who may have followed the carriage from Rome, and thus have discovered my

prison. Or the mysterious Esau, who suspected the devices of mine enemy, who warned me against them, and may have at length determined to defeat force by force!"

The shouts and knocking were repeated with increased vehemence, and Zillah, falling upon her knees in an enthusiasm of hope and gratitude, exclaimed, "Hosanna ! Ma tab El ! how good is God ! Said I not that He would save me, even as He delivered Job out of six troubles ? Who can withstand the Lord ? He maketh the ground to open and swallow up men alive, the sea to become dry land, that His chosen people may pass. He delivered the Princes of Judah from the furnace ; and lo ! He hath not been deaf to the moanings of the dove when it had fallen into the fowler's snare ! Hallelujah ! Hallelujah ! Praise ye the Lord !"

Every sense was now upon the watch with an exquisite acuteness of perception, for she looked for an almost momentary deliverance. At one

period she heard a hurried bustle of feet upon the stone pavement of the Temple ; but the noise ceased, and, though she listened with an almost breathless attention, a considerable interval elapsed without her catching another sound. The knocking was not repeated, the voices were no longer audible, all was again silent save the whistling of the wind, and her heart sunk within her; for if the recent tumult had been occasioned by friends assailing the Temple for the purpose of rescuing her, they would have instantly proceeded to ransack its chambers and vaults, the building would have never been left to that ominous repose in which it now slumbered. Placing herself beneath the grating, she screamed aloud, in order to announce her place of confinement, should any succourers be happily within reach of her voice. The cry echoed sharply through the vaults beneath, and the hollow fane above, when all was once more silent. No friendly shout replied ;

no sound of footsteps was heard; she again sunk upon the couch with a mute and blank misgiving that benumbed her very heart, for it seemed to her that the building was now utterly deserted.

Scarcely had she resumed her seat, when a faint gleam of light played suddenly around the walls of her prison, and instantly disappeared. She concluded it to be lightning, and that the storm must now have passed afar off, for she had heard no thunder; but the dungeon was again successively illuminated by brighter flashes of an angry glare, quivering upon the sides of the vault with red and nimble coruscations;—she caught at the same time a low hissing noise, which gradually became fiercer and louder—a smell of fire penetrated the cavern—a volume of dense smoke followed it, diffusing, as it passed, a suffocating sensation of heat; and upon looking upwards through the grating, Zillah beheld a mass of flame

forcing its way through the thatched-roof of the building, and running rapidly along the cornice of the chamber above. The whole horrid and appalling truth now burst at once upon her almost maddened brain.— The Temple was on fire! The knocking and outcries she had heard were to awaken and apprise the priests of their danger—they had hurried from the building, either totally forgetting their prisoner in the surprise and agitation of the moment, or not choosing to incur the risk of liberating her; and she was thus left to perish miserably in the vaults, from the slow effects of suffocation, or the more rapid but not less terrible agency of fire. A shuddering sickness struck upon her heart, and the blood curdled in her veins at the very thought. As some of the fugitives, it occurred to her, might still be within reach of her voice, she stood upon the table, as near to the grating as possible, and screamed with all the vehemence of

terror; but she heard no answer except the echo of her own cries, mingled with the hissing, crackling, and roaring of the flames. Again was she about to shriek for aid, when a blast of hot air and smoke, wafted towards her from some smouldering thatch, compelled her to descend hastily from the table, and she staggered against the door that led to the lower vaults. The fear of suffocation if she remained, and the possibility of discovering some outlet in the dungeons beneath, conquering all her previous objections to exploring them, she opened the door a second time, placed a chair to prevent its shutting, and hurried down the steps. By the flickering light that streamed through the aperture, occasionally emblazoning the place, and never leaving it totally dark, she perceived a succession of low arches, with openings to the right and left, which, not catching the rays, were shrouded in the blackest gloom. Following the direction of the light, she hurried along the

central range, until, upon nearly reaching its extremity, a blank wall of stone stopped her farther progress ; when she rapidly explored in succession all the dark openings to the right and left, which were similarly closed up ; and scarcely knowing, in the desperation of the moment, whither she was hurrying, she rushed back again to the dungeon she had left. As she bounded up the steps leading to it, she thought she heard the rattling of keys in the door of the room above, and again screamed aloud when she came beneath the grating. In another moment she clapped her hands together with a cry of ecstasy, for she beheld Bambo in the room above, and saw him adjusting the key to the padlock, with the manifest purpose of snatching her from the horrible death with which she had been threatened.

“ What ! they forgot the little bird in the cage, did they ? ” said the old man ; “ though, by Cybele ! you sang loud enough. The great

cowardly milksops ! Ay, you will find the dotard and cripple, as they called me, worth a dozen of them. But tell me, my pretty nightingale, have you not an aureus or two, or a bag of sesterces, for honest Bambo, if he saves you from being roasted alive ? ”

“ Alas ! I am a stranger in Rome,—a Hebrew maiden,—I have never had occasion for money, being always with my friends, nor have I a coin of any sort about me.”

“ Ay, I hear you are a barbarian, and the greater my kindness in troubling my head about you,” said the old man, coughing and spitting from the effects of the smoke, while he still kept the key unturned ; “ but if you have no cash, you beauties are seldom unprovided with sparkling rings and gay bracelets.”

“ Woe is me ! I quitted my abode so suddenly, that I brought not with me a single ornament ; but my friends shall reward you beyond your utmost hope. Quick, therefore,

quick ! for the love of mercy, unlock the grating, ere it be yet too late."

" Your friends ! How is an old cripple like me to go a wool-gathering after them ? Neither gold nor jewels ! this is to be worse than a barbarian : and why should I run the risk of letting you escape, if I am not to be rewarded for my humanity ?" The sordid old churl still kept the lock unturned, as if balancing in his mind whether or not he should abandon her to her fate, when Zillah suddenly recollected the gold chain placed around her neck by Salome on the eve of her departure from Jerusalem. She had been strictly charged never to part with it, as it was an amulet that would preserve her from witchcraft and other dangers ; but putting no faith in its supernatural properties, and believing that she should be well warranted in disregarding the injunction, if it could extricate her from her present extremity, she plucked it from her bosom, exclaiming—

“ I had forgotten ! I have a valuable gold chain, which I will gladly bestow upon you : but delay not another moment—open ! open ! I implore, I conjure you !”

“ Aha ! did you think old birds were to be caught with chaff ?” enquired the porter, again spitting and coughing. “ You drive a close bargain, but old Bambo has been too hard for you. Up, up ! we must be quick, for the burning thatch falls fast, and the rafters will soon follow. Whew ! how this smoke makes a fellow cough !”

He unlocked and opened the grating ; Zillah bounded up the steps, and was rushing towards the door, by which she had first entered the building, when her companion exclaimed, “ You cannot escape that way, it is blocked up with the burning ruins ; we must pass out at the front gate ; follow me.”

She obeyed, and after passing through an opposite door found herself in the body of the

Temple, one side of which was by this time completely enveloped in the flames. Quick as was her progress, she observed that two wooden statues standing before the shrine had taken fire ; their faces were burned away, their heads were blazing ; and as the fierce flames, with their red and hissing tongues, began to climb up the pedestal, and lap the blackened legs of the great image of Cybele, represented as a many-breasted female, crowned with rising turrets, and holding a sceptre in her hand, Zillah could hardly help imagining that the judicial fires anticipated their prey with delight, and reared themselves upwards with a more sparkling eagerness, because they were commissioned to destroy this obscene idol of the Pagans.

Zillah and her guide were now under the portico in front of the Temple; Bambo unlocked and opened an iron-gate, and holding out his hand, exclaimed, “ Give me the gold chain ;

mention not who let the bird out of the cage, but fly away as fast as you can."

As he uttered the words, and before he could receive the necklace, a portion of the shattered pediment, loosened by the flames, fell from above and crushed him to the earth ! Zillah shrieked with horror, and dreading lest she should share his fate, she sprang over the ruins, rushed forward for a considerable distance, and at length perceiving by the light of the burning pile that she was in the midst of the rocky heath she had previously crossed, she stopped, and falling upon her knees, thanked Heaven with an impassioned gratitude for her deliverance from the accursed Temple of Cybele.

CHAPTER VI.

HAVING performed this primary act of duty, Zillah started upon her feet; and as if she could not remove herself too rapidly, or too far from the vicinity of the hateful building, she ran forward in the direction of Rome with all the speed she could command, nor paused till exhaustion and the want of breath, occasioned by hurrying up an eminence, compelled her to make a momentary halt. From the summit of this ascent she perceived that a terrible conflagration was raging in the midst of the city; an immense column of black smoke, laced with flames, was towering upwards to the sky; and

as numerous flakes of some combustible material, borne by the stormy wind, were falling fast around her, she concluded that the fire, of which she had so nearly been the victim, had not broken out in the Temple, but that some of these burning masses, descending on the dry inflammable thatch, had set it in a blaze. From the darkness of the night, and her ignorance of the road, she might have found some difficulty in making her way to the city, but the flaming beacon before her was as the pillar of fire to the wandering Israelites ; and awful as it was to contemplate such a wide and fierce conflagration, she would not, perhaps, have remained altogether indifferent to its grandeur, but for the terrifying apprehension that her father and Gabriel might perhaps be exposed to its ravages. This harrowing thought quickened her progress : insensible to fatigue, she flew rather than ran, and in an incredibly short space of time passed through one of the gates, in the

rear of a detachment of troops, who were proceeding, with two battering-rams, to throw down some of the houses, in order to prevent the spreading of the fire. As she advanced, the sights and sounds of terror became more appalling. Dismayed parties were hurrying along the streets with loud shouts and cries ; carts and vehicles of all sorts were thundering towards the scene of distress, to save the goods and furniture ; trumpets were braying from various quarters to collect the troops ; the statues by the way-side, or in front of the more stately mansions, seemed to tremble as the shivering light fell fitfully upon them ; others that topped the lofty temples, and caught the red angry glare, while the lower part of the buildings was hidden by the smoke, showed like avenging angels hovering in the sky ; and the gilt dome of the Capitol, that surmounted the Tarpeian Rock, reflecting the light of the flaming houses, resembled a portentous hemisphere of fire, rising

like a meteor from the centre of the devoted city.

From the enquiries which it was Zillah's first care to make, she learned that the conflagration was raging at some distance from the quarter in which the Sagan resided, and she proceeded accordingly with renovated hope and spirits. But she soon became exposed to perils which she had never anticipated. As she advanced towards the heart of the city, the streets were scoured by riotous and lawless bands, who had issued from their obscure retreats for the purposes of plunder and outrage. Gladiators, slaves, watermen, thieves, ruffians, and desperadoes of all sorts, emboldened by the impunity afforded by the general confusion, robbed openly and by main force wherever there was booty to be obtained ; and murdered without remorse those who offered the least resistance. The fire itself was not so formidable as this tumultuary mob, to whom the sight of a female

was the signal for instant pursuit, and by whom to be overtaken was to be subjected to the most horrible outrages, which not unfrequently terminated in the destruction of their victim. To be young and beautiful was to be doomed to double misery, as Zillah had nearly experienced ; for the first set of these wretches whom she encountered, had no sooner caught a glimpse of her, than they set up a shout, of which she quickly interpreted the meaning, and took to instant flight. The ruffians followed, and though her footsteps were winged by fear, three of the fleetest succeeded in overtaking and seizing her. By a convulsive struggle she extricated herself from their grasp, darted down a by-street, turned suddenly into a dark arch, and heard them rush past it, when they probably soon abandoned the chase, and rejoined their companions by some other route, for their dreaded footsteps did not again meet her ear.

Warned by this narrow escape, she avoided

the principal thoroughfares, and crept along the darker lanes and byways, listening for the outcries of these roving gangs, and hurrying away from them, or concealing herself as well as she could, until they had taken some other direction. But by using these precautions, she wandered farther and farther from the point she wished to reach, until she was completely lost in the mighty maze of Rome. She saw none of whom she thought it safe to enquire her way—she could enter no house for protection, since the doors were all carefully closed—the carriages that usually plied for hire in the night were all engaged in the conveyance of families and property from the burning houses : no females passed her, or such only as she dared not accost ; and she was timidly stealing a glance at the men who hurried by her, in order to discover a friendly countenance, on which she might throw herself for protection, when, upon turning a corner, she unexpectedly emerged into a wide street,

just as a band of riotous marauders were careering along it. Several of those who were in front immediately darted towards her, and Zillah, knowing that her best chance of escape was in those narrow lanes which were only imperfectly illuminated by the conflagration, fled down one which she had just been traversing, threaded several others at full speed, and crossed and doubled like a hare chased by the greyhounds. But the present were not to be so easily baffled as her former pursuers. The sound of their heavy iron-bound sandals still rang in her ears—it grew nearer and nearer—she was exhausted by her efforts, and was beginning to despair of eluding her eager followers, when she beheld before her the front of an extensive mansion, flanked on either side by a narrow passage, planted with trees, which enveloped it in a comparative gloom. Speeding down one of these alleys, she ran along the back wall of the house ; it was pierced in its centre by a few

steps leading to a narrow door: an old man, who had been standing at it, apparently making some lunar observations with an instrument, returned into the building as she approached; and Zillah, drawing herself up on the shaded side of the recess in the wall, remained for some time close to the door, irresolute whether or not to implore admittance. Some new alarm deciding her at all events to make the attempt, she tried the lock of the door:—it opened, and she found herself in a narrow passage, terminated by a flight of stone steps. These she ascended:—there were now two passages before her: she followed the one to her right—it conducted her to a second door—she pushed it open, and stepped into an apartment, which at any other moment would have inspired her with surprise and dismay, though she now conquered those feelings, in the hope that, whatever might be its nature, it might prove a sanctuary for the preservation of her honour and her life.

Its shape was circular, the signs and monsters of the Zodiac were painted in large sprawling figures upon the walls, the ceiling was covered with hieroglyphics and astrological devices, a rotatory table, divided into the twenty-four hours, supported various strange instruments and uncouth figures, and under each of the zodiacal signs was inserted a brazen head, of which the eyes were made to roll, and the tongue to wag, by means, probably, of the same internal machinery that set the table in motion. As this latter, with its magical-looking apparatus, pursued its gyrations, and the brazen heads seemed to stare angrily and to mow and mock at Zillah, as if to threaten her for having dared to invade the silence and solitude of that mysterious chamber, a greater degree of terror would doubtless have been joined to her profound wonderment, but that she would have almost welcomed death itself, under whatever

appalling shape, rather than be again exposed to the brutal miscreants from whom she had just made her escape. Of these she heard nothing more ; her present hiding-place appeared at all events a secure one, and she stood for some time listening with breathless anxiety, or stealing timid glances at the eyes that rolled and glared ominously around her, until she began to imagine herself the victim of some enchantment, and to dread the return of the sorcerer whose station she had usurped ; when, as if to dispel her dream by a reality that was even more terrible than her worst apprehension, the door opened, and Mark Antony presented himself to her appalled and starting eyes ! A simultaneous cry burst from both, but Antony's perhaps betrayed the greater terror ; for in the belief that an apparition was before him, the colour fled from his cheeks, his very lips grew pale, and although the returning blood

quickly crimsoned his face, his accents, when he would have essayed to speak, faltered and died away upon his tongue.

Zillah was the first to recover self-possession, and conscious that she was again in the power of her most dreaded enemy, whose alarm and confusion had not passed unobserved, she imagined, that by working upon his religious terrors she might perhaps induce him to forego his profligate designs. In this hope she succinctly related the destruction of the Temple of Cybele, which she attributed to the vengeance of Heaven on account of the infamous purposes to which it had been prostituted ; and assigning her own deliverance to a providential interference of the God of Israel, she explained the circumstances which had driven her to her present asylum, concluding with a passionate supplication that he would restore her instantly to her friends, if he wished to avoid the wrath of that Deity who had once rescued her from his snares, and

had thus warned him against the hot and heavy judgment which would inevitably follow his perseverance in the same criminal designs.

During this recital, Antony, shaking off the superstitious panic by which he had been astounded, and ashamed perhaps of its betrayal, gradually resumed his usual impudent stare, and even affected an additional nonchalance, as he exclaimed with a taunting smile—"Harkye! my majestic Juno! my round-limbed Callipyges! If you thank the God of Israel for snatching you from the Temple of Cybele, to what Pagan Deity must I offer sacrifice for having thus obligingly conducted you to my own house?"

"Your house! yours!" exclaimed Zillah with mingled despondency and amazement.

"Even so, my stag-eyed goddess! This is the mystic, divining closet of my Egyptian Astrologer, and I shall ever reverence it the more, as having been the chosen asylum of the

beautiful Zillah. Surely it is an auspicious augury that the bird shall not finally escape me, when she thus flies spontaneously into the cage. I accept the omen. Perhaps you will be safer here than in the Temple of Cybele : I told you that I never faltered in my purposes : mine you are destined to be, and mine you shall be before the sun which is now rising shall have sunk into the arms of Thetis. Ha, Migdol !” he continued, addressing the Astrologer, who now made his appearance, and who seemed scarcely less surprised than Antony at the sight of such an unexpected inmate in his chamber—“ you come in good time. Where is the key of the Egyptian Gate ?”

“ I had been making some celestial observations, and I inadvertently left it in the portal, but I will bring it instantly.”

“ It is unnecessary ; as I am going out that way, I will lock the gate and take the key. The Consuls and the Praetor have sent for me

to assist in quelling the tumultuary populace, as well as to take the command of the soldiery who are trying to arrest the progress of the conflagration. In the mean time, I commit to your custody this Hebrew damsel : keep her a prisoner where she now is, there cannot be a better hiding-place, until my return ; but remember, that you have to deal with a truant and a runaway, and that I hold you accountable, even with your life, for the charge that I have committed to you." So saying, he kissed his hand to Zillah, bade her prepare for his return, and hurried out of the closet.

In spite of the somewhat gaunt appearance of the old man, and the lamp-like flaring of his black eyes, which seemed to have almost started from his head in the constant attempt to peer into futurity, there was an air of benignity about his mouth, which, in conjunction with the confidence inspired by a beard grizzled with age, emboldened Zillah to appeal to him for

protection, to recount the fraud and violence of which she had been the victim, and to beseech him to connive at her escape, even if he declined being actively instrumental in effecting it.

“ I pity you, maiden, pity you with my whole heart, but I dare not violate the trust reposed in me ; nor can I, much as I regret the proceedings of my patron, interfere to prevent them ; for he is violent and vengeful, and the life of man or woman weighs not with him in his wrath. And yet, maiden, my heart yearns strangely towards you ; for alas ! I myself once had a daughter—my poor Zaida !—who was comely and majestic as thou art.”

In the tremulous tones of his voice, and the relenting expression of his glistening eye, Zillah suddenly caught such a new and confident hope, that, throwing herself upon her knees, she besought him, as he had himself been a father, and could feel for the misery of her bereaved pa-

rent—as he had himself once possessed a daughter, and could sympathize with the wrongs and sufferings of the suppliant then kneeling before him—to liberate her from the misery and dis honour with which she was threatened, and restore her to her family. The Egyptian heard not a syllable of what she had uttered ; for in throwing herself at his feet, the gold necklace having got loose, and the large star affixed to it being displayed upon her bosom, he riveted his starting eyes upon it, and remained for some seconds aghast and transfixed with speechless amazement. “ The necklace ! the necklace ! the talisman !” he at length ejaculated, gasping for breath.—“ O my beautiful, my murdered Zaida ! it was thine ! it was thine !” He stooped down, pressed the star with fervour to his lips, and continued in a broken voice, while the tears trickled from his eyes—“ Maiden ! maiden ! may this amulet prove more auspicious to thee than it was to my lost Zaida ! I

ask you not whence you got it, for your peril brooks not delay. It is sufficient that I recognize these hieroglyphics—that I see them around your neck : the charmed, the mystic star once worn by Zaida, shall ever command my services; and for the sake of her who is no more, I solemnly swear to effect your deliverance if it be yet possible. Follow me, and be silent."

" Not into the streets !" exclaimed Zillah, venturing to disobey his last injunction, " not into the streets ; this were to increase rather than diminish my peril."

" I know it, maiden, I know it. It would little speed me to read the stars, if they told me not what was passing upon earth. Trust all to me, and follow."—Zillah obeyed in silence, when her conductor, leading her to the diverging passages which she had previously noticed, traversed the one to the left, ascended a long flight of wooden-stairs, opened a door secured only by a latch, and ushered her into a

granary filled with lumber and sacks of corn, behind the latter of which he secreted her as effectually as possible ; and charging her on no account to stir until he should return, although several hours might elapse, he prepared to leave her. She would have poured forth her gratitude for his most critical interference, but he whispered that her escape was not yet certain, put his finger upon his lips to enjoin silence, and disappeared.

Alone, in silence, and secured, as she trusted, against immediate danger, Zillah was at length enabled to collect her hurried and agitated thoughts ; and yet, when she did so, when she reviewed the terrible and eventful occurrences of the last few hours, she could hardly persuade herself that the whole had not been a hideous phantasma, the nightmare of a disordered imagination, especially when she contrasted it with the placid unvaried course of her early life, hallowed as it was by the consoling sancti-

ties of religious observance, and endeared by one peaceful flow of domestic happiness. It was by no means the least marvellous, among the recent strange occurrences, that her present asylum, if such indeed it might be termed, was in the mansion of *Antony* himself, her most dreaded and inexorable enemy : a circumstance which excited no less amazement in her mind, than the transport, reverence, and deep emotion, with which the *Astrologer* had contemplated the necklace, and the instant and most critical change that it had wrought in his sentiments. Having no faith herself in the magic influence of charms and amulets, she had been surprised at the superstitious credulity of *Salome*, when, in placing it around her neck, she had declared that it was a talisman which would preserve her in many dangers ; and yet, if it should now work out her deliverance, she might consider that it had twice saved her in one night, for she verily believed that *Bambo* the porter would

have left her to perish had she not bethought herself of this golden bribe ; and the Astrologer had declared his utter inability to assist her, only a moment before this inexplicable star of her destiny had led him to pledge his life for her liberation. It was vain to oppose theory to facts, and half persuaded that the necklace was in reality endowed with some charm to preserve her, she replaced the star in her bosom, and concealed it with additional care. To Nabāl's predictions, which were at that very moment receiving their painful fulfilment, she had ever yielded an implicit credence ; but that Salome's assertious, as to the hidden properties of the necklace, should be accomplished at the same time, perplexed her thoughts with a thousand strange conjectures. All the mysterious circumstances connected with Esau, forcing themselves also upon her recollection, added to the bewilderment of her mind ; while her reflections upon the misery with which her loss must be

wringing the bosom of her father and Gabriel, rendered her own distress the more acute and poignant.

The tortures of suspense, added to so many other sources of suffering, aggravated her anguish, until it became almost intolerable; hour after hour, however, dragged wretchedly away, without any alleviation of her anxiety, and misgiving fears began again to fall heavily upon her heart. She could never forget that she was in Mark Antony's house: the Egyptian, recovered from the delirium into which he had been thrown by the surprise of the talisman, and dreading the heavy wrath of his patron, might have repented of his promise, and meant perhaps, after all, to abandon her to her fate. Why should she any longer place her safety in the hands of a half-crazy superstitious dotard, for such, perhaps, he would eventually prove, who might either forget the pledge into which his astrological fatuity had betrayed him, or

want the power, even if he had the will, to redeem it? The day was now far advanced, order must have been restored in the streets, and although she knew the back-gate to be locked, she might, perhaps, in the mid-day bustle of so crowded an establishment, pass through the mansion unobserved, and make her escape by the front entrance. Every hour, every minute, only added to the chance of Antony's return, and consequently to the probability of her own loss; and she upbraided herself for not having sooner reflected, that by remaining where she was, she might only become the victim of a new treachery. Determined to wait no longer, but to attempt the execution of the bold scheme she had devised, she was just about to quit her hiding-place, when the Egyptian re-appeared. Such a slave was this man to his science, that although his whole heart was set upon the liberation of Zillah, a task which promptitude was the most likely means to effect, he dared not pro-

ceed to action until he had made various planetary observations, which had been the sole cause of the delay. Even now he declared that, upon consulting his own horoscope, he had been forbidden to attend her in person, though every precaution had been taken to secure her safe delivery to her friends.—“By the influence of my art, I have the means of pacifying Antony,” he exclaimed, “when I act contrary to his orders; but I dare not disobey the stars. I will let you out at the back gate, of which I possess a duplicate key. Turn to the left on descending the steps—you will find a carriage waiting for you—tell the driver whither to convey you, and let your friends lose no time in bearing you from Rome; for Mark Antony seldom foregoes his purposes of this nature, and his power is as unlimited as his will is obstinate.” So saying, he conducted her to the gate, opened it, blessed her, murmured the name of Zaida, waved her away with his hand, and

Zillah gladly obeying the motion, hurried down the steps, rushed towards the carriage, jumped into it, bade the man drive to the street Mercury, concealed herself in a corner of the vehicle, for fear of encountering the hated Antony, and with a flutter of the heart that almost prevented her breathing, soon found herself driven rapidly along in the direction of her home. To describe her anxiety as she occasionally cast furtive glances from the window—her delight when, by passing some well-known building, she was sure that she was approaching her father's residence—would be utterly impossible. At length they entered the street Mercury, and the man, owing to some misunderstanding of her orders, was driving rapidly past the house, when Zillah, almost maddened by anxiety, and rendered distrustful by the recent treacheries she had experienced, put her head from the window, and cried out in terrified accents, “Stop him ! stop him !” It chanced that Simon, who

was standing at the door as she passed, recognized her voice, and rushing into the street, seized and stopped the horses. The driver descended hastily from his seat, Zillah jumped from the carriage and ran into the house ; when Simon, seeing his young mistress safe, and imagining that the coachman had been a party to her abduction, pounced upon him with the grasp of a tiger, and in spite of his outcries and desperate resistance, dragged him into the chamber where the Sagan and Gabriel were sitting in mournful silence after their return from the Senate-house, and hurled him to the ground in the manner already described.

Exhausted and overcome by the fatigues and agitations she had endured, Zillah was unable to support the joy of finding herself once more restored to her home. Clinging to the wall of the passage, she was for some minutes utterly unable to proceed ; but at length, exerting all her remaining strength, she tottered into the

apartment, just as Simon had mastered his antagonist, and screaming out, “ My father ! my father ! my dear father !” fell fainting into the arms of the Sagan.

CHAPTER VII.

As soon as Zillah was restored to consciousness, and could explain the innocence of the drier, he was handsomely remunerated for the maltreatment he had experienced from the mistake of Simon, and dismissed from the house; when a scene ensued of mutual congratulations and embraces, of tears and transports, which for some time prevented any coherent relation of the recent painful occurrences, every consideration of past distress being momentarily absorbed in the sense of present ecstasy. Upon the subsiding of these first ebullitions of joy, Zillah, relieved by the

tears she had shed, gave a hasty recital of the terrible dangers and intense sufferings to which she had been unceasingly exposed since she had been decoyed away from the house by the infamous Priest of Cybele. The appearance of the Hebrew group during her narrative would have formed a subject for the artist. She herself, pale and careworn from sleeplessness and agitation, holding the hand of her father in her own, fixed upon him her large, tender, expressive eyes, which, as she described the load that even in the depth of her afflictions was taken from her heart, when she found that the tale of his illness was an invention, involuntarily overflowed with tears ; and again became suffused with pious gratitude, as she adverted to the providential deliverances she had experienced. Weak and exhausted, the Sagan's haggard countenance now melted with uncontrollable ruth until he wept and sobbed aloud in sympathy with his affectionate

child ; and anon, was distorted with bursts of passion, in the excess of which he convulsively clutched his hands, gnashed his teeth, rose from his seat, and again sunk into it, groaning at the discovery of his own infirm state. Gabriel never removed his glistening eyes from the face of Zillah ; and although he could not restrain his emotions as he contemplated those of his two relatives, and more especially when he reflected that there was, alas ! no return for his own lost daughter, as there had been for the Sagan's, still he listened to the narrative with a prospective view to their future operations, for he felt during the whole of her statement that they must be prompt in their proceedings, in order to complete Zillah's ultimate deliverance from danger. Though this consideration was ever uppermost in his thoughts, he now and then muttered deep execrations against Mark Antony, and the infamous abettors of his enterprise, for having tricked him out of

the jewels, before they put their atrocious designs into execution. The face of Simon the Levite, who stood behind Zillah, and leaned forward, that his eager ears might not lose a syllable of her recital, was flushed and pale by turns, as he was inflamed with choler or aghast with apprehension ; while his right hand repeatedly grasped the handle of his sword, as if he would crush it in the vehemence of his indignation. When she had concluded, his fiery impetuosity could be restrained no longer ; he tore the steel from its sheath, and shouting out, “ Mi camoca baelim Jehovah !” the war-cry of the Maccabees, proposed that they should sally forth in search of Mark Antony, and hew him in pieces like Agag before the face of the Lord.

“ Thou art right—thou art right !” cried the Sagan, kindling afresh at the blind and reckless fury of the Levite ;—“ give me my weapon—I will stab the villain in the eyes—I

will eat his heart in the Forum—the red kennel shall smoke with his blood ! Let us be gone, I will hunt him through Rome—I am strong enough now—I feel quite able to—” A violent fit of coughing stopped his utterance, and the powerless Sagan, who had again started upon his feet, sunk once more into his chair with a groan. These ebullitions of inconsiderate rage were but momentary, for the failure of their late rash attack upon Antony’s mansion could not be forgotten by either of the parties ; and both Gabriel and Zillah recalled to the Sagan’s attention the advice of Pyttalus, and the less questionable recommendation of the friendly old Egyptian, that they should not lose a moment in flying from Rome. If this measure were to be adopted at all, it could not be too promptly executed : when Zillah’s escape was discovered, her enraged persecutor would, probably, attempt to seize her by open force ; and, as the law could afford no redress against

so powerful an oppressor, their only chance of avoiding his grasp was to get beyond its reach before he could concert measures for detaining them. Zillah was eager in urging the adoption of this measure; her father, unable to deny the cogency of her arguments, at length gave his consent; and the whole party, harassed and overworn as they were, exerted their remaining strength in making instant preparations for their departure. These, however, were soon completed; for Gabriel observed, with a sigh, that they had now no jewels to conceal; a remark which drew forth an additional execration upon the knavish Triumvir, who, after having thus scandalously defrauded them, had effectually secured himself against all reclamation by compelling them to fly from Italy. In returning to Jerusalem, he strenuously advised that they should not travel by the way of Brundusium, which would afford their enemy numerous opportunities of intercepting them; but that they

should embark on board the first vessel bound for Palestine ; a route which would considerably lengthen their voyage, but which would as materially increase the chances of their safe arrival. All parties coinciding in the wisdom of this counsel, Simon was dispatched for a carriage, into which they hastily entered, secured their luggage underneath it, and bidding the coachman drive them to a sequestered spot upon the banks of the river at some distance from the city, they passed through the Flaminian Gate, and turned their back upon imperial Rome with much more delight than that with which they had first entered it by the opposite extremity of the Appian way.

At the suggestion of Zillah, who dreaded pursuit or even recognition, and anticipated an enemy in every passenger, they muffled up their faces, and concealed themselves as effectually as they could, almost afraid to speak, lest they should be betrayed by their voices. There was

some difficulty in persuading the stout Levite to adopt these necessary precautions, for, as he felt that they were the robbed and injured party, he held it derogatory to the Hebrew honour that they should thus crouch before their Pagan oppressors, and steal out of the city like criminals ; but as Gabriel assured him that when opportunity occurred they would assert their wrongs with their swords, and call the Triumvir to a strict account for his mal-practices, he contented himself with clutching his weapon with both hands, as if afraid that its escape might rob him of his revenge ; when, making a compromise of his feelings, he muffled himself up in his cloak, and pretended to have fallen asleep. Thus they travelled on for some time in silence, abandoned to their own thoughts ; which, however painful and angry they might be in reviewing the late occurrences, assumed gradually a more complacent character, in the conviction that every minute was removing

them farther from Rome, and the atrocious machinations of Antony. “Where are we, good Gabriel?” at length whispered the Sagan; “I see cattle and fields on either side of us. Have we already left the accursed city behind us? Look forth, but cautiously, cautiously, good Gabriel, and tell me where we are.”

“As the suburban buildings follow the bendings of the river, we have left them, and are now taking the straight road across the meadows towards the spot to which our driver was directed. I can see the summit of the Capitol and of the Temple of Vesta, over the tops of the trees behind us; but with these exceptions, no part of the city within the walls is any longer visible.”

“And you hear no trumpet, no alarum; you see no pursuers, no horsemen following us?”

“All is quiet, and no human beings but ourselves are at present moving through these extensive pastures.”

“ Hallelujah ! Hallelujah !” shouted the Sagan, as the long gathering load of apprehension was removed from his heart: “ she is saved ! she is saved ! come to my arms, to my heart, Shelomi ! my peace, my child, my daughter, my beloved Zillah ! I have thee, I have thee again !”—and he clasped her almost convulsively to his bosom, while the gushing tears streamed upon his beard, and fell fast upon her neck. “ We will never part—thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken, but Hephzi-bah, my pleasure ! ’Twas I who brought thee hither into the house of Dagon ; I who thrust my darling into the lion’s den ; I who, like Jephthah the rash Gileadite, had nearly sacrificed my child ; but the Lord hath rescued thee out of all thy dangers, he hath given thee back to mine arms, to my heart, even as he restored every thing to David after the Amalekites had spoiled Ziklag. Hosanna ! Blessed be the name of the Lord !”

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“ My father ! my dear father !” sobbed Zillah, burying her head in his bosom ; “ this happy moment—But compose yourself, I beseech you ; you have not strength to support these transports—you tremble all over.”

“ It is with joy,—with straining you to my bosom in these enfeebled arms ; but I will not relax my hold : do not go from me ; my throbbing heart will burst if you do not suffer me to press you thus against it : I feel as if it were leaping from my bosom to embrace you. Oh, Zillah ! my child ! my child !—closer, closer, come still closer to my heart !”

The delighted father attempted to press her to his bosom, but overcome by his emotions, his arms sunk down to his sides, his eyes closed, and he reclined powerless against the back of the carriage, faintly murmuring, “ My child ! my darling Zillah !”—Revived in a little while by the fresh air of the open fields, he again gazed around him, and observing that the tears

were stealing down his kinsman's cheeks, he took his hand, and gently pressing it, exclaimed, "Forgive me, good Gabriel, if I have distressed you by the vehemence of my emotion, but recollect how insupportable a loss would mine have been ; for, surely father was never blessed with child so dutiful, so affectionate, so pious, so pure, so faultless as my dear—as my darling—as my—" His utterance was choked ; he tried in vain to sob out the name of his Zillah, who again affectionately embracing him, implored him to be composed. The Sagan returned the pressure ; gazed upon her with a look of ineffable tenderness ; nodded smilingly, as if to intimate that he would obey her injunctions ; and resigning himself to the corner of the vehicle, suffered the sweet drops of gratitude, joy, and affection, to flow down his cheeks without his uttering a syllable, or seeming to need any other society than his own happy thoughts. Zillah and Gabriel were both too much affected to break this

silence of deep emotion, until they reached the house at which they intended to stop; when the latter, eager to dissipate the painful reminiscences that beset his mind, by his customary expedient of bodily exertion, jumped from the vehicle, snapped his fingers, and hurried away, leaping over every obstacle that crossed his path, to issue the necessary orders for the accommodation and refreshment of his friends.

The house at which they had thus taken refuge, was a lonely inn upon the banks of the Tiber, the occasional resort of anglers, watermen, sailors, and others connected with the river, on which account, as well as its sequestered situation, it had been selected by Gabriel. Here he had hoped to obtain information of any vessels that might be immediately bound for Palestine; but he was informed that the merchant ships, and indeed all those of heavy burthen, generally moored four or five miles lower down the river, in the direction of the port of

Ostia. However anxious he might be to hurry forward, the fatigue of the horses, and more especially the exhausted state of himself and his companions, imperatively dictated some respite to their exertions ; and they accordingly halted in their present quarters for four hours, during the first of which they partook of some refreshment, and dedicated the remainder of the time to the much-needed restorative of sleep. Renovated both in mind and body by this most welcome repose, short as it was, they renewed their journey with comparatively tranquillized feelings, for they now began to discard all apprehensions of pursuit ; and in due time reaching the place to which they had been directed, they betook themselves to an inn by the river-side. Gabriel, who had hastened to make the needful enquiries, soon returned with the agreeable tidings that he had secured a passage for the whole party on board a merchant-vessel bound for Tyre, which was to sail on the following day,

or the next at latest ; observing, that if they declined travelling by land from that port to Jerusalem, they might easily engage a small bark at Tyre, which should convey them to Joppa. Nothing could be more acceptable than this intelligence, which was received with mutual felicitations and embraces ; and hoping to be effectually recruited by a night's undisturbed sleep, they determined to pass it where they were ; still, however, retaining their carriage, lest the driver, by returning to Rome, might betray the secret of their flight.

The day had now closed in, and although the hour was still early, the Sagan was preparing to return thanks to Heaven in an evening prayer, for the deliverance of his child, previously to their retiring to rest, when, hearing the sound of a trumpet and the neighing of horses, his heart sunk within him, and his countenance fell with it ; for his misgivings upon Zillah's account had now rendered him tremulously sensitive to every

alarm. "It is nothing," said Gabriel, observing his dismay, and anxious to dispel it, "nothing that need scare you thus. There are barracks here for the troops who embark for foreign service; and this is probably some detachment ordered hither for that purpose, since I observed numerous transport-vessels in the river."

"Jehovah Tsebaitoth! the Lord of Hosts be with us!" ejaculated the Sagan, whose fears were evidently not diminished by this suggestion of his kinsman.

"Verily, Rab Malachi, your trepidation surprises me. Where is the courage, not to say the temerity, that led you to the storming of Antony's mansion, and his impeachment in the Senate?"

"I was then, good Gabriel, as an Ariel, a lion of God, for I was desperate in having lost my child; I am now timorous as the dove, who having recovered her nestling from the hawk,

fears the shadow of every wing. But you are right—my terrors were doubtless vain ; for how should it be known that we had fled from Rome, and, above all, that we had bent our course hitherward ? Wherefore we will to our prayers, imploring the Lord, who rescued David out of the wilderness of Ziph, to deliver us from the snares of the Pagan."

Ere they could execute this purpose, however, a loud knocking was heard below, while a voice called out, in angry authoritative accents, "Open your door instantly, or I will batter it from its hinges ! I demand admittance in the name of Mark Antony !"

At these terrible words, Zillah, who had hitherto concealed any apprehensions she might feel, clasped her hands together in an agony, exclaiming, "We are lost ! we are lost ! What will become of me !"

Aghast with sudden consternation, the Sagan threw his arm instinctively round Zillah, and

stood trembling and listening in an agony that deprived him of speech, though his lips moved in the vain attempt to give utterance to his feelings.

“ El emanu ! God is with us !” cried Simon, drawing his ever ready sword ; “ we will cut our way through the uncircumcised villains, and escape !”

“ Hist ! let us do nothing rashly,” said the considerate Gabriel, who had also unsheathed his weapon. “ I hear female voices. I will descend, and inquire into the cause of this alarm. If you hear me cry out the word ‘ Jerusalem !’ conclude that there is danger ; endeavour to escape as quickly as possible by the back of the house, and I will either hold our enemies in parley, or defend the entrance with my sword, until I have given you time to get clear off.” Thus saying, he hastily quitted the apartment.

“ For the parley, you may have it all to yourself,” said the Levite, following him ; “ but if

there be clashing of swords, it shall never be said that Simon was content to hear it without taking a part in the fray!"

Trembling in one another's arms, and listening, as it were, with mouth, ears, and eyes, (for every sense was upon the stretch to catch the next sounds,) the Sagan and his daughter stood for a short time transfixed and speechless; but their suspense was not of long continuance; their terrors were dispelled almost as rapidly as they had been excited; they heard a window open in the adjoining house, when a female, in a sharp and angry voice, exclaimed, "Begone, you noisy varlet! what mean you by disturbing my house at this time of day?"

"I am the private quarter-master of Mark Antony, the Triumvir; and, in his name, I demand admittance for these two ladies, whom I have billeted upon your house."

"Ladies, forsooth! they were here before, and I soon saw what sort of ladies they were.

I am an honest woman, fellow! and will not suffer my house to be polluted by any such harlotry ; ay, and if my good man were alive, he would soon send you skipping, sirrah, for daring to billet your trulls and trollops upon decent people."

" Saucy beldame!" cried one of the females in the street, " we are respectable dancers, belonging to Mark Antony's company of actors: we are to embark to-morrow for Egypt, and if you do not give us a night's lodging, we have friends in Rome who will have you scourged with rods till you cannot stand, or, perhaps, batter your house about your ears with a ram."

" What ! cannot he fight the Parthians without a company of players ? Proh, pudor !—Respectable dancers, truly ! O Dominum æquum et bonum ! I suppose Thoranius, the pimp, will vouch for your virtue ; and methinks I have seen each of you at the Circus, in a yellow mitre. As for your friends in Rome, I

dare say they are numerous enough, for such baggages are hail fellow well met with all the rogues and vagabonds in the place ; but I care not for them, any more than I do for Antony himself, and so, my lady-dancers, you may e'en dance off to some other house, for here you cross not the threshold."

The actresses scolded and stormed, the quarter-master again thundered at the door, but the stout-hearted widow, who, in addition to her virtue, seemed to have a considerable share of the virago in her composition, matched them in vituperative language, and made good the possession of her domestic castle ; so that the besiegers, after discharging some fresh volleys of abuse, mixed with fierce threats for her contumacy, were fain to decamp in search of another lodging. Gabriel and Simon returned at the same time to the apartment, when the former stated that several of the players,

both male and female, being billeted upon the inn, he had learned from them that Mark Anthony's baggage and train were to be embarked at this place, but that he himself would leave Rome in two or three days for Brundusium, whence he intended returning to his government in the East. "Good tidings! good tidings!" cried the Sagan. "When the manna fell in the wilderness, it was at first taken for snow; but it proved a blessing instead of a curse; and even so, Gabriel, have you brought us pleasant news, when we looked for nothing but terror and sadness." In this welcome intelligence they not only found ample subject of congratulation at having chosen their present route, but being now relieved from all danger of future pursuit, while their recent alarm was proved to have been utterly unfounded, they betook themselves to their prayers and thanksgivings with an additional fervour of

gratitude, and retiring soon afterwards to rest, had the unspeakable satisfaction of passing a night in sweet and undisturbed slumber.

At an early hour on the following morning they proceeded in high spirits to the wharf for the purpose of embarking, when the Sagan, striking his foot upon the earth, exclaimed to his companions, “ Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground, but we have doubtless been visited with sore sorrows for our own offences ; let us, nevertheless, my friends, shake the dust of this accursed and idolatrous country from our feet ; the more especially as we are now about to turn our faces towards the Holy Land. Nor let us omit, on the next Fast of Expiation, ere the Azazel be led into the wilderness and abandoned, or thrown over the precipice at Jerusalem, to put our hands upon its horns, to confess our sins, and implore forgiveness ; and may the scarlet ribbon which is

fastened to the Temple-gate be miraculously changed to white, as it ever happens upon this holy anniversary, in proof that our sacrifice is accepted of God, that expiation has been duly made, and that our sins are forgiven us."

"Amen, amen ! Selah !" cried Simon, stamping upon the ground ; Zillah and Gabriel repeated the same words, accompanied with a similar action ; when the Hebrews, contenting themselves with this hasty purification, until a more solemn and efficient one could be performed, gladly withdrew their feet from the Roman soil, and entered the merchant-vessel which was to convey them to Tyre. On the same afternoon they sailed down the river to the port of Ostia, the banks of the Tiber on either side being adorned with a succession of villas, embowered in groves and gardens. Many of the buildings on their right were the backs of large hotels, of which the fronts faced the Ostian road, where it approached the river ; but

the grounds of all were laid out in an uniform taste, the walks enclosed and darkened with tonsile evergreens, shaped into the representation of animals, or grotesque and fantastical forms ; the lawns that sloped down to the water covered with, what Pliny calls, the soft and almost liquid Acanthus ; and the whole plantation encumbered with statues of stone or marble. Formal and somewhat gloomy as was the general aspect of these mansions, Zillah, whose exhilaration at the prospect of quitting Italy disposed her to be delighted with every thing she saw, contemplated them with pleasure, and expressed her admiration in terms which her father would not suffer to pass without a rebuke. Although not less gratified than his companions at escaping from the land of the heathen ; his hatred, which in this respect resembled true love, seemed to gather strength as it receded from its object ; and experience having now shown him that he might safely

indulge his animosity, so long as he confined himself to the Hebrew tongue, he burst into an angry, not to say a passionate philippic, against the Romans, which effectually silenced for the future every encomiastic allusion to Italy, and all that it contained."

"Amen, Selah!" ejaculated Simon, drawing himself up, as the Sagan concluded his malediction, and looking very sternly at the Roman sailors, who, fortunately, understood not a syllable of what had been uttered. "No wonder they are such barbarians," he continued, "for they have no order of Levites for whom they set aside the tithe of corn, fruit, and cattle, and who in return may minister in the Temple, study the law, and become judges in their courts. The savages! they have no true Temple, no inspired Prophets; no Pool of Serpents; no Valley of Hinnom; no Shekinah; no golden candlestick with seven branches; no shew-bread; no holy fire; no high priest; no golden snuffers for the

lamps ! Lo ! they keep no sabbaths ; they eat the sinew of the hind-quarter, and drink of the cup of devils.”

“ Which, however, contains no unpalatable beverage,” observed Gabriel, “ if it be filled with strong Chian wine. How say you, Simon?”

“ I had no Eli to whisper unto me, ‘ Put away thy wine from thee.’ How say I, ask you, Master Gabriel ? Verily I would say unto thee, as Balaam did to his ass,—‘ Because *thou* hast mocked me, I would there were a sword in mine hand, for now would I kill thee.’ ” The retort was a tolerably sharp one, and the Levite, who had not the smallest relish for a joke, especially when it was at his own expense, seemed by his lowering looks so well prepared to exemplify his quotation, should he be goaded by another taunt, that Gabriel held it prudent to forbear ; and reverting to the Romans, declared that he should quit their country without a single subject of regret, had he not left behind

him the rare gems he had taken so much pains to collect, and thus enabled Mark Antony, like another Hezekiah, to make treasures for precious stones, and for all manner of pleasant jewels.

“ I need not record my own gratitude and joy at quitting the hated shores of Italy,” said Zillah ; “ and yet, my dear father, I can scarcely deem the Romans such barbarians as you would maintain, when I recollect the pleasure I have derived from the perusal of their literature.”

“ It is all stolen, my child, as I before stated, from that of the Greeks ; and your pleasure would have been quickly converted into unutterable disgust, had I not been careful to select and purify what I placed before you ; for abominations, licentiousness, and all the worst faults of a gross, vulgar, and uncivilized people pervade their writings, and attest the pollution of their lives. Some openly avow and inculcate a sensual Epicureanism of the most brutalizing tendency. They who are philosophers and

moralists in theory, are all profligates in practice, all as hypocritical and hollow as the historian Sallust, whom we lately saw walking in his beautiful gardens on the Quirinal Mount, and who has proved by every act of his life, that the pure and noble sentiments in his works have never had the smallest influence upon his conduct. There is no dignified and stainless literature in the world except our own ; none so holy and august ; none so sublime ; none which has inculcated so lofty a morality ; none which has been so truly exemplified in the irreproachable lives of its inspired authors."

Casting anchor between a picturesque island and the busy town of Ostia, at the mouth of the Tiber, they were detained several days to complete their lading ; a delay which, as they had now discarded all fear of pursuit and detention, was only regretted as it retarded their arrival in Palestine. In the anticipation of this happy event, which now promised to be of certain

and speedy occurrence, complacency and peace once more sate upon the Sagan's brow. He chatted with Gabriel, he congratulated and embraced his daughter, he pointed out to both the direction they were to take to arrive at Tyre ; he got up before daybreak to contemplate the rising sun, because it ascended from the East : he conversed familiarly with the sailors, Romans though they were ; and as he reclined upon the deck, discoursing with Zillah, and carrying forward his thoughts to their arrival in the Holy City, he exclaimed, “Zillah, my child, we have lost the months Elul and Tizri, and it grieves me that I cannot participate in the Fast of Expiation, seeing that we have all such flagrant need of its purifying influence, on account of the many defilements we have contracted among these accursed Pagans. But God's will be done ! We must seek a special absolution for ourselves, and if we could behold the Temple, even in the month Marchsevan, in

time for the feast in memorial of the stones of the altar profaned by the Greeks, and put aside by the Maccabees, I would fall upon my knees, and thank Heaven with a grateful and rejoicing heart. So may it be ! Amen !”

Simon, who somewhat disdained the menial offices to which he was subjected as an inferior Levite, but delighted in the service of a chorister, rehearsed a portion of the psalms and hymns in which he had been occasionally called, by rotation, to take a part ; his long beard, deep voice, enthusiastic manner, and foreign tongue, affording an inexhaustible subject of amusement to the sailors, although some of them, growing weary of solemn tunes, would now and then call upon him to strike up a merry song of the sea, or a Bacchanalian roundelay.

Such had been the tumult and agitation of Zillah’s mind during the last few eventful days, that she had had no leisure to analyse her own sensations, or even to indulge any other feeling than

an all-absorbing anxiety to fly from her persecutor, and make her escape from Italy. In the comparative security and composure of her present asylum, and in the lapse of several days, during which the vessel was waiting for a fair wind, after the completion of its lading, she was enabled to take a deliberate review of the different adventures she had encountered since her departure from Jerusalem ; to recall the predictions of Nabal, and the faithful, though she feared it could not be termed the final accomplishment they had received ; to speculate anew upon the mysterious, and apparently the unmeaning apparitions of Esau ; to dwell fondly and with a lingering minuteness of recollection upon the occurrence in the Amphitheatre, and the subsequent prolonged and interesting conferences with Felix. Aware of the predominance of this latter subject in her thoughts, a sense of modest delicacy had induced her to consider it last ; but she could not chase its

impressions from her mind, as she could all those that referred to Nabal and Esau, and the talismanic necklace. They remained behind ; they became the perpetual inmates of her bosom ; they presented themselves when she sunk into unconscious reveries ; they were renewed with more vivid distinctness in her dreams. Felix, his virtues, his amiability, his intelligence, his superiority to the rest of his countrymen, were the themes over which her heart brooded in silence, which she contemplated with delight, and yet with an ever-increasing melancholy that elicited frequent involuntary sighs from her bosom. These she attributed to her regret at leaving his perfect conversion unaccomplished, to the dread of his relapsing into all the blindness of idolatry ; and even when the anchor was weighed, and the vessel stood out to sea—when she was actually steering towards her beloved Palestine, and quitting

the scene of all her sufferings and peril—when, instead of the rapture which such a moment was calculated to inspire, she found herself watching the receding shores of Italy with a sentiment of regret, of which every instant deepened the intensity,—when at length, as the shades of evening shut out the last point of land upon which she had riveted her straining eyes, the tears stole from the cells in which they had long been lingering, and coursed one another down her cheeks,—still, still did the deluded girl imagine that her emotions had no other source than compassion, and a profound interest for the spiritual welfare of Felix. Zillah was too innocent too inexperienced to suspect that her hitherto unvisited heart had at length been touched, that the fountains of its deep tenderness were at that moment overflowing from her eyes, that she had receded from the shores of Italy with such a soft regretful emotion, because it was

the abiding-place of Felix, and that the deep concern for his welfare, which had originated in religion, was now prompted by the fondness of a fervent though undeveloped love.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE Italian coast was again in sight on the following morning, and continued so for several days, during which the prevalence of adverse winds induced the pilot to keep in shore, that he might run into port, should such a measure be rendered necessary by the state of the weather. At times, they approached so near as to be able to recognize several of the towns, hills, and headlands ; of which the names being communicated by the captain to his Hebrew passengers, served to recall to them many passages of the Roman history ; while they were contemplated with an additional interest

by Zillah, for reasons which she herself could hardly define, even while she felt their influence. As they passed the rocks of the Sirens, which they did at a cautious distance, many marvellous tales of the female monsters who once inhabited them, were recited by the crew; one of whom sang a ballad upon the subject, to which his companions most eagerly listened, with every appearance of an implicit belief in its terrible marvels. The waves were to be seen foaming over the crags which still bore the name of these seductive warblers, but the nymphs themselves no longer displayed their beautiful forms floating upon the water; and instead of the once-irresistible enchantment of their symphonious voices, our voyagers were fain to listen to the loud and unmelodious chant of the sailor, recording their mellifluous achievements in most uncongenial strains. In the apparent determination not to expose the valuable cargo with which he was entrusted to

any avoidable peril, the captain again cast anchor off the Liparæan Islands, with the intention of passing the night there. It was a beautiful serene evening, and as Zillah stood upon the deck, she surveyed with admiration the calm and reposing magnificence of the scenery that surrounded her. The sun was just sinking behind the Island of Sardinia, throwing broad masses of shadow for some distance from its shores, and irradiating the remoter waters of the Tuscan sea with a ruddy bloom, while it crowned with a more golden radiance the distant heights of Sicily and Campania. The great luminary at length sunk slowly and majestically down; a veil of deepest purple fell over the face of Nature; the wind was hushed, the waves were lulled, and the world seemed to be resigning itself to the sleep of darkness, all but the lofty summit of Mount Ætna, whose rose-coloured snows, still gleaming in the rays of the sun, might have almost persuaded the

spectator that the volcano was at that moment burning. Even this beacon, however, was at length extinguished, and every thing became shrouded in the deep gloom of a moonless night. The sailors, after having sung in chorus a rude invocation to Neptune, soliciting his protection while they were asleep, but at the same time threatening to neglect his temples if he turned a deaf ear to their request, had retired to their hammocks, with the exception of those who were to patrol the deck till daylight. The Hebrews had separated after the completion of their customary prayers, and Zillah, in the solitude of the narrow cabin which had been assigned to her, was left to darkness and her own meditations.

In vain did she endeavour to address herself to sleep. Her thoughts had become involved in the solution of an enigma which, however obvious it might have been to others, proved much too intricate for herself to unravel. She

enquired of her own heart, why it should feel thus heavy and oppressed, when so many circumstances combined to fill it with hope and exultation ; she demanded why her retrospective affections should cling to the shores she had left, instead of being thrown forward to those of her native land, which she was about to revisit ; she taxed herself with inconsistency, with ingratitude to Heaven ; she was vexed at the nature of her feelings, and equally so at her inability to fathom them ; for not even in the secrecy of these self-communings, although her thoughts were constantly reverting to Felix, did she suspect the real origin of her sensations. In this unavailing scrutiny, the hours slipped away, and still she could not sleep. She opened the hatch of the cabin-window, which was scarcely large enough to admit her head, and looked out upon the midnight sea. All was black and dumb. Now and then, indeed, she caught the tramp of the watch patrolling the

deck ; but in the intervals of their march, it appeared as if the sea were dead, and that light and sound had deserted the world together. Silence itself seemed hushed ; and the intense voiceless repose of earth and ocean, sublime and even awful as it was to one thus floating in the midst of darkness and the great waters, imparted such a soothing influence to her bosom, that she again closed the window, in the persuasion that she should now be enabled to slumber.

Not long had she extended herself upon her bed for this purpose, when the profound serenity of Nature was suddenly startled by the fierce blast of a trumpet, mingled with the shrill piping of a whistle, instantly followed by the quick tramping of feet, and loud dissonant cries of “ All hands on deck ! Up, up ! All hands on deck ! ” This alarming summons was simultaneously answered from various parts of the ship by the shouts of the captain and sailors

rushing from their beds; at the same instant, Zillah could hear grappling-irons rattling against the deck and rigging, and distinguish the struggling of numerous boarders scrambling up the sides of the vessel. In another moment, there was a fierce and terrible scuffle immediately above her head; the clashing of swords, the cries of rage, the screams of anguish, pierced her thrilling ears; and two of the combatants, being either killed or driven overboard, were dashed successively into the tranquil waters beneath her cabin-window. They were the watchmen who had been patrolling the deck. A momentary pause succeeded their destruction; but some of the crew having made their way upwards by the fore-hatchway, the contest was renewed at the farther extremity of the vessel. It was sharp and desperate, but not of long continuance; for after the same appalling sounds of clashing steel, wrestling feet, shouts and groans, other victims were heard plunging

into the waves, the hatches were shut with a loud bang, and bolted down, all farther efforts on the part of the imprisoned crew were unavailing, and the captain himself, who had been unable to force his way upon deck, called out to his men, that they had no alternative but to surrender to the pirates who had surprised their vessel.

So rapidly had all this been transacted, that Zillah, who sat shuddering in her bed, had not had even time to guess at the cause of the terrific uproar. Indeed her faculties were too much appalled to be capable of free exercise : there was but a single board between herself and this scene of tumult, agony, and death, when it had first commenced ; the plank, which almost touched her head, shook with the stamping of hostile feet, or the heavy fall of the victim, whose deep groan of death seemed to be almost poured into her ear, as she heard the wretched being dragged along the deck, and

hurled into the plashing wave. Although her eyes were spared the sight of this bloody conflict, she had participated in all its horrors: it was a relief, therefore, to her harrowed feelings, when she found that the struggle was over, even though its result had left the ship in possession of its fierce assailants. From the words of the captain, she now learned that they were pirates, into whose hands she would rather have fallen than into those of Mark Antony; and although her first impulse had been to fasten the door of her little cabin, to secure herself from outrage, her anxiety on her father's account induced her to open it, and call out his name. Accompanied by Gabriel and Simon, he was already making his way towards her, as rapidly as the darkness would allow, when, clasping her in his arms, he declared his readiness to submit passively to the dispensations of Heaven, whatever they might be, since his child was safe. Simon, afraid to wield his drawn

sword, lest he should wound his own friends, and furious as a trapped tiger, implored Gabriel to enquire, since he himself could not speak the language of the heathen, whether they might not still force their way upwards, and attempt to recover the vessel. For this purpose, they all made their way to the cabin, where the remainder of the crew were assembled around their captain, who repeated, that since the hatches were fastened down, resistance was impossible ; they were, unfortunately, in the power of their assailants, and must resign themselves to their fate. He expressed his opinion, that they had been captured by a pirate, well known by the name of Bald-headed Salvius ; a son, as it was said, of the celebrated flute-player, who had been saluted King by the rebellious slaves of Sicily, in the time of Marius. This sea-rover commanded a vessel of small force, but had become formidable of late from the desperate character of his crew, and the daring

enterprises he had achieved, most of which had been accomplished in the night-time. His galley drew so little water, that it was impossible to pursue her in any vessel of force, amid the intricate navigation of the rocks and islands to which he always fled for refuge. Nay, he had been known to dash with this light bark through the roaring whirlpools of Scylla and Charybdis, where none could follow without certain destruction ; while he had formed a magazine for securing his booty amid such inaccessible fastnesses upon Mount *Ætna*, that no attempt had been hitherto made to dislodge or even to molest him. “ However,” continued the captain, “ although I would rather have heard the dogs of Scylla and Charybdis barking in my ear at midnight, than have thus fallen into his power, it is but justice to state, that Salvius is never unnecessarily cruel : we are all sure of good treatment, for avarice is the leading feature of his character, and we are now become his property.

They who can procure ransom-money from their friends will be readily given up; they who cannot, must pray to Jupiter for kind masters, for they will all be inevitably sold for slaves."

" This is good treatment, indeed," said Gabriel; " and I suppose we are to judge of his humanity by his conduct to the poor fellows on deck, whom he cut down, and threw over-board with so little ceremony."

" Nay, while he is fighting to obtain booty, he is furious and fell as a beast of prey, and human life is viler than sea-weed in his eyes; but when his plunder is secured, he becomes as calm and calculating as a merchant, and will injure nothing that can be turned to account."

It would be difficult to imagine a company more disconsolate and forlorn than that of the captain, his passengers, and the survivors of his crew, thus huddled together in the total darkness of the cabin, listening to the trium-

phant laugh or heavy tramp of their captors parading the deck above, while each speculated in gloomy silence upon the captivity that awaited him. Some revolved in their minds the possibility of procuring ransom-money from their friends or relations, reckoning them over one by one, weighing their pecuniary means, balancing their will against their capability to assist them, and drawing conclusions according to the sanguine or desponding temperament of the calculator. Others who, from their friendless state, had not even this poor consolation to sustain them, resigned themselves to the thought of slavery ; and, obeying the captain's advice, prayed inwardly to Jupiter, or Neptune, or to whichever of the numerous Pagan Deities happened to be their favourite, imploring that he would grant them kind masters, speedy means of escape, or an early manumission. The Sagan whispered to his daughter, that the God of Abraham and of Isaac, who delivered Jacob

from the hand of Esau, Zedekiah from the sword of the slaughterer, and Daniel from the lions, would deliver them also from the great waters and the hands of strange children ; bidding her be of good cheer, and address her thoughts to Heaven. This was a counsel that Zillah scarcely needed, for in the hour of terror and deep jeopardy her devout soul seemed instinctively to spread its wings, and seek shelter from the troubles of earth amid high and celestial thoughts.. Others, it is true, would sometimes unconsciously mingle with her meditations ; and, if she occasionally adverted for a moment to the predictions of Nabal, now receiving a new accomplishment, or to the ambiguous friendship of Esau, or even indulged the notion that the talisman she wore about her neck might possibly become instrumental in extricating her from her present calamity, her allegiance to Heaven so far from being weakened by these human associations, was rather confirmed and fortified ;

the recollection of her past deliverances corroborating the hope of future protection. Darkness veiled her face; but could its expression have been seen, as she sate beside her father, holding his hand in her own, it would have been found that the terror and agitation of the night-attack had gradually passed away, and that it now wore a character of calm and holy resignation.

The Sagan himself, with all his irritable feeling and jealous bigotry, possessed so much simplicity of character in worldly affairs, that he would never have dreamed of dissembling his real name and rank, had not Gabriel reminded him, that if the pirate should discover him to be the second High Priest of the Jews, he would immediately fix such a price for his ransom, that his friends at Jerusalem, unable or unwilling to raise the money, might leave him to pine in captivity. From King Antigonus, aware, as he soon must be, that they had failed in their

mission, and that the jewels with which they had been entrusted, even if they had not fallen into the hands of Mark Antony, would naturally have become the prey of the pirate, no assistance whatever could be expected ; and he therefore counselled the Sagan to pass himself off for a common priest returning with his daughter from Rome, whither he had been to visit some relations :—Simon might wear his real character of an inferior Levite ; and he himself needed to practise very little deception, when he represented himself as a poor kinsman, travelling with his relation in quality of an assistant. The Sagan was, moreover, recommended to offer such a moderate sum for the ransom of the whole party, as might confirm the statement of their humble station, and be raised without difficulty as soon as they should have the liberty of writing to their friends. All these discreet suggestions, which, of course, passed in Hebrew, were readily adopted. Simon was

tutored how to comport himself, so as not to excite any suspicion ; the Sagan received a few words of salutary advice, inculcating a due respect for Salvius, the Bald Pirate, since he was now the absolute master of their fate ; Zillah promised to be watchful and circumspect : and thus prepared to encounter the interrogatories of their captor, they patiently awaited the coming dawn of day.

Upon seizing the vessel, the pirates had instantly cut the cable ; and a gentle breeze having sprung up, the sails were unfurled, and the prisoners in the cabin found themselves in motion without knowing what course the ship was steering. Upon this point various conjectures were started : the captain declaring, that if they had really been taken by Salvius, he would sail direct for Mount *Ætna* ; but that, if they stood out to sea, they might conclude themselves to have fallen into the power of some of the African corsairs,—a possible contingency, which

he contemplated with undissembled dismay, on account of their ferocious character, and the little chance of redemption from so remote a slavery. It was a great relief, therefore, to all parties, when, as the morning dawned, they could discern from the window of the cabin the stupendous bulk of \textcircumflex Etna, presenting its rocky masses to them in dark grandeur, while as the sun painfully and slowly climbed up its opposite acclivity, the pyramidal shadow of the mountain, forming a visible track in the air, stretched across the whole island and far into the sea. While they were admiring this grand object, the Hebrews were not a little surprised at hearing the pirates very devoutly putting up their morning prayers, and singing hymns to Neptune and Mercury ; nor was their wonder diminished, when the captain assured them, that the Bald Pirate, whose identity he did not now any longer doubt, was not less remarkable for his own religious character, than for the strictness with

which he enforced its observances among his crew. Choosing Mercury for his appropriate Deity, he had affixed his statue to the head of his galley, scrupulously setting aside a tenth part of all his booty for the Temple of his patron in the vicinity of Mount *Ætna*; the priests of which were his agents in negotiating the ransom of his prisoners; while the rude inhabitants of that district, benefiting by the spoils he made, were the confederates of his robberies and violence.

The sun had hardly risen above the snowy summit of the mountain, when the pirates again casting anchor off the northern extremity of the island, and at no great distance from the entrance to the perilous Straits of Scylla and Charybdis, partly opened one of the hatches, and ordered the captain upon deck, notice being at the same time given, that if more than one person presented himself at the hatchway, he would instantly be cut down. With this

command the captain immediately complied ; when, after a short delay, during which he was probably giving a list of his cargo and crew, the latter were called up by name, disarmed, handcuffed, and again sent below. Our Hebrews, who followed, were also disarmed, but, as they were evidently not belligerents, and the pirate seemed to credit the account of their rank and station, they suffered no farther indignity, and were even allowed to remain upon deck. Zillah, as she ascended, was not a little startled at the grim array of the sea-robbers, who stood around the hatchway with their drawn swords, presenting a gang of runaway slaves, gladiators, and renegadoes of all nations, whose ferocious looks were by no means calculated to allay her apprehensions, although the whole crew seemed to be in perfect subjection to their leader. Salvius himself, who had obtained the name of the Bald-headed Pirate from his want of hair and his always choosing to fight with-

out a helmet, had paid dear for this strange propensity, his skull being furrowed with scars, as if it had been always foremost in every onset, and had ever presented a fair mark for the swords of his assailants. He appeared to have been the principal combatant in the recent struggle, his tunic, as well as his naked arms and legs, being stained with blood, some of which was still oozing from beneath a bandage, placed carelessly around his knee, though he paid no attention to the wound. He was rather below the common height, but exhibited great muscular strength, his short, partially grizzled beard betraying a touch of age which was nowhere else discernible. His eye was deep-set beneath a broad bold brow; his lips were compressed, his expression, though by no means stern, was indicative of a calm energy, which provocation would soon render terrible; he spoke little, intimating his orders by a look, a nod, or by pointing with his finger; and how-

ever furious and fell he might have been in the desperate struggle of the night, he now wore a look so perfectly composed and phlegmatic, as he sate behind the hatchway, noting down upon a waxed tablet, with the point of his dagger, the names and number of his prisoners, that he might have been rather deemed some careful and methodical merchant, taking an inventory of his cargo, than the captain of a desperate gang of pirates and outlaws, reckoning up his plunder.

Zillah observed that he noticed her with a very strict and searching scrutiny ; and although his regards were not of that immodest character which had offended her in Mark Antony, but rather the keen survey of a chapman calculating the market value of a commodity, she liked not the sordid aspect of his eyes, and walked away towards the stern of the vessel. Here, however, she was exposed to a worse annoyance, for she noticed, with a shudder, that the deck was

red with the blood of the unfortunate victims who had perished in the conflict of the night, to avoid which revolting object she hung over the side of the vessel, gazing upon the beautiful Island of Sicily. But little time was allowed her to admire its scenery, for the galley belonging to the pirates now rowing close up alongside, the Hebrews and the captain of the ship were ordered to transfer themselves into it. With a courtesy which he little expected, the Sagan was asked what luggage belonged to him; and on his describing it, the whole was brought from the merchant-vessel, and deposited in the galley. Emboldened by this considerate treatment of the Hebrews, the captain requested the same favour for himself; and on its being refused, ventured to remind Salvius that he was a Roman citizen, hoping, perhaps, to soften or intimidate him by the mention of that redoubtable name.

“ So are all the Sicilians,” replied the pirate

calmly, “ by a late decree of Mark Antony; and though I disdain to claim any rights that he, or his whole nation, can confer, I maintain myself to be a true Roman by my acts, for I wage war with all the world, kill those who oppose me, and make slaves of those that surrender. Handle your oars, my comrades, and pull away for the Goat’s Cave.”

The rowers shaped their course eastward, and it was not without a new alarm, that the Sagan and his companions found they were about to pass through the formidable Straits of Scylla and Charybdis. All the fabled horrors of these whirlpools, so proverbially fatal to navigators, rushed upon their memories with such a fearful influence, that as they heard the eddying gulphs roaring on either side, they were in momentary dread of being sucked within their vortex, and swallowed up by the foaming waters. Salvius, however, himself sate at the helm, calm and unconcerned as if he

were upon terra firma; and though they were occasionally whirled forward with a frightful impetuosity, they made the perilous passage in perfect safety, and, still coasting the island, soon found themselves close under the eastern side of Mount *Ætna*.

Just before the death of Julius Cæsar, a terrible eruption, which was afterwards considered by the superstitious as an indisputable omen of his approaching assassination, had devastated this side of the island, pouring such a torrent of lava into the sea, that its heat destroyed the fish for a considerable distance, and shooting out burning masses, by which vessels were set on fire, even in the Liparæan Islands. Of this frightful convulsion the ravages were still manifest, while several subsequent explosions of less magnitude had rent asunder the sides of the mountain in various places; tumbling masses of rock over deep precipices, piling up immense hills of ashes, vomit-

ing forth torrents of water scarcely less mischievous than the lava, and disfiguring with hideous desolation the arena wherein the elements had so furiously fought. The galley had now got into shallow water, and passing the low rocks of the Cyclops, covered with women washing clothes, the rowers ran up a narrow creek, where the sea made the nearest approach to the base of the mountain. As they advanced, the Hebrews contemplated the prospect before them with deep and thrilling awe. It was indeed a scene of beauty and chaotic convulsion, of terror and delight, as if a world had been suddenly overturned and broken up in the bloom of its loveliness, in the summer of its exuberant fertility. The character of these magnificent ruins of Nature varying with every change of their position ; at one time they beheld rugged crags, masses of lava, and rocks blackened with fire, towering up one above another in inaccessible precipi-

pices ; while the track of recent destruction was marked by whole groves laid prostrate, tremendous chasms yawning in the sides of the still smoking mountain, and unbedded rivulets or newly formed torrents leaping madly from height to height, as if eager to make their escape from the terrific region of fire. In another moment, their eyes would fall upon an unvisited district, reposing in all the security of its own leafy and quiet grandeur ; venerable trees of gigantic size standing forward upon crags and projecting ledges, as if they were the champions of the majestic forests, which, from the inequality of the ground, rose behind them in amphitheatrical succession, gorgeous in the last deep tints of autumn, and thrown from their irregular position, into groups and glades, which afforded the strongest relief of light and shadow. Again, their view, taking a lower direction, expatiated over a sunny landscape of sylvan and pastoral beauty, presenting one un-

varied character of soft and pleasant fruitfulness. This garden of Ceres and Pomona bloomed, although with occasional interruptions, around the whole base of the mountain, which was belted higher up with a zone of forests; while its summit was circled with a desert region of snow and ice, from the centre of which gusts of white smoke were perpetually puffing.

Debarking at the extremity of the creek, the Sagan and his companions were conducted over a rocky, sterile, and apparently trackless territory, to the foot of the chain of mountains known by the name of *Ætna*, which they immediately began to ascend, not without toil and difficulty, from the steepness and unevenness of the ground. As they climbed upwards, new views of every variety of character, from the picturesque to the terrific and sublime, were continually opening; trees of cork, chesnut, and evergreen-oak, not less remarkable for their stu-

pendous size than the beauty of their form, were scattered amid the broken ground in wild profusion; and as they wheeled round the base of a huge rock, which had been recently wrenched from some higher eminence, and had marked out its destructive track by the trees it had shivered asunder, or totally overthrown in its progress, they came in view of the ancient Temple of Vulcan, situated at a very considerable elevation above them. It had been partially shattered down in the recent great eruption, its altar was deserted, its boasted perpetual fire was extinct, and the venerable oaks which had once encircled it, were now prostrate around it, leafless and dead, like faithful guards who had laid down their lives upon the spot they had been appointed to defend. This object was soon lost in their winding progress, which now became every moment more toilsome and perilous, sometimes leading them close to the edge of dizzy precipices, which Zillah could not contemplate

without shuddering, or across torrents bursting from the furrowed sides of the mountain, which they were obliged to cross by the assistance of a long plank borne by one of their attendants for that purpose; while they were more than once threatened with suffocation from sulphureous exhalations fuming out of the pores of the black lava upon which they trod.

The Sagan complained heavily of fatigue; and Zillah, anxious to procure some respite both for her father and herself, seated herself upon a crag at the base of a rocky wall, declaring her inability to proceed any farther. "You have no occasion; at the top of this precipice overhead is the Goat's Cave," said the pirate, who had marshalled the way during the whole of their route without uttering a single word. Zillah cast her eyes upwards, wondering how the perpendicular height was to be scaled, especially as it was rendered unassailable in one direction by a little cascade, which, leaping from

above, hurried along the foot of the rock, and then plunged into the tufted evergreens below; but her doubts were soon solved, for one of the attendants, drawing a ladder from the clumps of juniper, rhubarb, and saffron, among which it was concealed, placed it against the rock, when Salvius, in spite of the wound in his knee, ran up it, and steadyng it with his hand, as soon as he had gained the top, beckoned to the others to follow him. The Sagan hesitated, objecting that this mode of ascent would not afford secure footing to a female, unaccustomed to such rude clambering; but Gabriel, observing that they had no alternative but to mount, since they would never be able to find their way down again, unless they descended headlong like the uprooted rocks, set his foot upon the ladder, and assisting Zillah to ascend, while the others followed immediately behind her, the whole party had soon reached the summit.

They now found themselves upon a rough

platform of rock, surrounded by the precipice, up which they had just climbed, except where it joined the continued acclivity of the mountain, in which part Nature had formed out of the ancient lava an extensive series of subterranean grottoes, known by the name of the Goat's Cave, from the place having originally been the resort of those wild animals. It was now, however, the magazine and armoury of Salvius, the Bald Pirate ; who, by means of ropes, hoisted up hither his lighter and more valuable booty, while he confined within its inaccessible labyrinths such prisoners as were likely to bring him any considerable ransom. The entrance to the different caverns was carefully barricadoed and secured, a garrison of five or six armed men was always stationed on the spot, and a signal post being hoisted upon the platform, which commanded a view of the whole island and surrounding sea, they were enabled, by means of different flags, to give notice of every

vessel that approached, as well as to summon their comrades to their support, should their rocky keep be menaced with attack.

Passing under a lofty arch of black lava, beneath which vast numbers of wild pigeons had built their nests, the Hebrews were ushered into an open cavern, forming a sort of vestibule to the others, where they were committed to the custody of a lame old man, of rather ingratiating appearance, when compared with his comrades, who had been the pirate's chief-mate, but had become incapacitated for active service. Taking a bunch of keys from beneath his tunic, and lighting a torch that he might find his way, Salvius now unlocked the entrance to his subterranean stores, and proceeded to compare their contents with a memorandum-book, which he always carried about his person, having previously ordered the mate to search the prisoners strictly. Zillah revolted from the thought of being subjected to this process by ruffians who

were little likely to execute their commission with much delicacy ; but the mate, as if he read her wishes, confirmed the prepossession she had already imbibed from his countenance, by declaring that he would summon his daughter for the purpose. He accordingly applied to his mouth a loud whistle, whose echoes rang shrilly among the distant caverns and gorges of *Ætna*, when, pointing with his finger, they beheld a girl standing upon the salient angle of an opposite height, at a considerable elevation above their heads, and Zillah uttered an involuntary cry of terror as she saw her leap boldly down, like a rivulet, into the glade below, and disappear. “ Be not alarmed, lady,” said the mate, in an accent which betrayed his Grecian origin, “ my Helen, who lives all day upon the mountain, and knows every stone and rock from base to crater, never does herself any injury, though it is sometimes frightful enough to see her chasing the wild goats, and jumping

after them, like an antelope. There she is again, bounding from yonder pile of lava. Ah ! we have lost her now, she has plunged into the great ravine. Poor girl ! if she were not crazy, she would never run such risks, nor take so little harm ; for they say Jupiter always protects those who have lost their wits." Zillah enquired how this misfortune had been occasioned.—" Though I see by your dress and dialect, that you are barbarians," replied the mate, " you are surely aware, that when the giant Enceladus rebelled against Jupiter, he was struck with a thunderbolt, and overwhelmed beneath the mountain on which we are now standing. The flames which it sometimes vomits proceed from his breath, its thunder is his angry voice, and when he turns upon his side, or attempts to rise, the whole island shakes to its foundations. Near the summit of the mountain, the lava is perforated with unfathomable caves and chasms, communicating

with one another, and leading, as it is supposed, into the very bowels of *Ætna*. My poor Helen had been missing for two whole days ; we sought her every where in vain ; we had given her up, concluding that she had fallen over some precipice and perished, when she at length emerged from one of these bottomless clefts in the lava, aghast, speechless, almost dead. For nine days she was stone deaf, and although her speech and hearing then returned to her, she has never recovered her wits. What she saw to occasion her bewilderment she has never revealed, but we imagine that she must have penetrated far enough to behold the giant struggling in the great gulf of fire beneath the crater ; or perhaps her ear was stunned by the noise of the subterranean Cyclops forging the thunderbolts of Jupiter. Poor girl ! poor Helen ! it was an unlucky day when she wandered into those fearful labyrinths.”

“ Will she find the ladder so as to reach the

platform?" enquired Zillah, interested in the daughter, from the feeling evinced by the parent, who had turned round at the conclusion of his story to conceal a tear.

"She will not need it," said the mate; "she will scramble down the mountain over our heads, though none but our goats ever attempt that passage, and some of them have perished in the descent."—His assertion was soon confirmed, for they presently heard the numerous wild pigeons flapping their wings and flying off, scared by her approach; the noise of her feet was then distinguished, as she crawled down by the help of the shrubs and twigs; and in another minute she leaped upon the platform, threw from her back a light quiver with her bow and arrows, and entered the cavern, jingling the perforated coins and money which were fastened to the ends of her long black locks. Zillah was rather disappointed in her appearance, for she was coarse and swarthy, heated and disordered by her late

exertions, and possessing little pretension to beauty beyond her wild-looking black eyes, which, however, by recalling her unhappy state, could hardly fail to excite the sympathy of the spectator. No sooner had she understood the purpose for which she was wanted, than she took Zillah into an inner recess, and obeyed her father's injunctions with a strictness that proved her to be by no means deficient in cunning. Zillah was curious to know whether the talisman, which had exercised such an inexplicable dominion over the old Egyptian at Rome, would charm this wild girl from her purpose, and convert her into a friend and ally ; but Helen, unclasping it without any visible emotion, examined it, as if to ascertain that it was gold, poised it between her fingers to feel its weight, and then dropped it carelessly into a little basket by her side. "I said it was absurd, preposterous, to attribute any magical influence to this foolish bauble," whispered Zillah to herself.

Once, indeed, she had said so, but latterly she had adopted a different opinion ; and her judgment having thus two alternatives to depend upon, took credit to itself for that which happened to be justified by the event : a sure mode of being right, which many people practise, without suspecting the self-delusion into which they so complacently fall.

Although she had put several questions to her companion, both in Latin and in the best Greek she could muster, Helen gave no answer, but proceeded in her scrutiny, soon, however, atoning for her taciturnity, by singing, in a voice of surpassing sweetness, snatches of ballads allusive to the Sirens, the Cyclops, Enceladus, and other fabulous personages connected with the island ; or fragments from the Idylls of Theocritus, all warbled in so wild and delightful a strain, that Zillah almost forgot her fatigues and troubles in listening to her. The Sagan and his companions, in the mean time,

were undergoing so rigorous a search, that Gabriel, had he still possessed his jewels, would have stood no chance of secreting them from such experienced and shrewd inquisitors as were now handling him. Just as this process was completed, and they had been effectually stripped of every valuable, Salvius re-appeared, counted over the money that had been taken from their persons, examined Zillah's talismanic necklace, weighed it in his hand, and dropped the whole booty into a leathern pouch, which he carried beneath his tunic. He then informed the Hebrews, that they must continue in their present place of confinement for a day or two, descended the precipice, hid the ladder among the bushes, as much, perhaps, to prevent any of his prisoners from escaping, as to secure his magazines, and disappeared.

However painful might be the feelings and reflections of our Hebrews, at finding themselves committed to so strange a prison, with a total

uncertainty as to their future fate, they were by no means sorry when the lame mate placed before them some fruits and other refreshments, with a flask of excellent wine. Nor could they have been recreated in princely hall or lady's bower, with more dulcet minstrelsy, than that which charmed their ears while they were discussing their repast; for the crazy Greek girl, sitting upon the platform in front of the cavern, warbled portions of the Hymeræan Ode, the Syracusan Gossips, and the Bucolic Singers of Theocritus, sending the echoes of his strains over the same district which had first given them birth. At sunset she ceased her melody, when Zillah, oppressed with drowsiness from the vigils of the previous night, enquired for her resting-place. She was shown a niche, issuing from one of the grottoes, into which she gladly retreated; her father stretched himself close to the entrance of the recess; Gabriel and Simon found accommodation elsewhere; and though they had no better

beds than leaves and dried wild flowers, were surrounded by walls of lava, and were reposing over the subterranean fires of the most terrible volcano in the world, whose crater was at that moment smoking, none of the party had ever enjoyed more undisturbed slumbers, even when sleep had been courted “ with all appliances and means to boot.”

CHAPTER IX.

WHEN Zillah revisited the platform on the following morning, she found it nearly covered with a flock of goats belonging to the pirates, the animals always collecting themselves at that hour to be milked by Helen; the mate was cleaning and sharpening arms; the man at the signal-post was taking a watchful survey round the island, and some of his companions were mending nets; for when no more profitable occupation offered, the pirates occasionally employed themselves in fishing. From these objects her attention was soon withdrawn, to contemplate the magnificent view outspread before

her, on which the fatigue and anxiety of the previous evening had not allowed her to bestow more than a cursory notice. Nearly the whole island, with its numerous cities, its parched shores, the waves dashing and sparkling around them, and the deep blue ocean beyond, were to be seen at once; while the mate pointed out to her attention the celebrated plains of Enna, crowned with the Temples of Ceres and Proserpine, and so profusely covered with odoriferous plants, that, as he declared, the dogs of chase lost the scent of the game in the pervading perfume of flowers and honey. From that point of the platform over which the cascade threw itself, she could discern the ruined Temple of Vulcan, of which she had obtained a glimpse on the day before; and her companion directed her attention to the summit of the mountain, where numerous labourers were seen collecting snow, not only for the supply of their own richer countrymen, but to export to the

luxuricous inhabitants of Tyre, Sidon, and Malta. Unconscious how the time had lapsed away while she was gazing at this sublime prospect, Zillah was astonished to behold Helen upon the opposite crags of the mountain, climbing up some of the volcanic hills formed in the late eruption, rolling large stones into the craters which still remained open, and making the rocks echo with her wild laughter, as she listened to the fragments rumbling for a long time afterwards in the bowels of the earth. This, as it appeared, was one of her favourite pastimes; although this wild Diana had other amusements, since she seldom returned to the cave without some sort of game, pierced by her unerring arrows. The mate even informed Zillah in a whisper, and with a look of reverential regret, that she had lately shot one of the sacred birds of Jove, in the vicinity of the snowy region; expressing his devout hope that it would not be considered an act of impiety, as her

unhappy state rendered her unconscious of the sacrilege.

Three days elapsed, during which they saw nothing of *Salvius, the Bald Pirate*, who had, however, been busily employed in the interval ; for he had no sooner ascertained the value of the vessel he had made prize of, than he determined to embark on board it all his stores at the Goat's Cave, seek a market for his cargo at the farther extremity of the Mediterranean, and abandon for the present his establishment upon Mount *Ætna*, which he feared had begun to excite too much notice to be any longer safely tenable. Other motives, which will be developed in the sequel, contributed to this resolution, in execution of which he landed the former crew, put his own freebooters on board, and brought the ship round to the eastern side of the island, for the more convenient shipment of his booty. On the fourth day, the pirates were all busily employed in lowering their accu-

mulated hoards, and transporting them through defiles and hidden ways to the coast, when Zillah, as she stood beside the streamlet that crossed the platform, observed successive puffs of dense black smoke shooting up to a considerable elevation in the midst of the white, which the crater of the mountain had never ceased to emit from the period of their arrival. Calling her companions to witness the phenomenon, they continued watching it, not without awe and dismay, until it gradually assumed the form of a lofty, black, and apparently solid column, from which, in a short time, perpetual flashes of forked lightning began to issue, followed after an interval by a tremendous and almost stunning explosion, which was rebellowed, like a long roar of thunder, from all the cavernous throats of Etna, and produced such a concussion and shaking of the mountain, even to its very base, that for some seconds they had great difficulty in standing still. By this earthquake, the re-

mains of the ancient Temple of Vulcan were hurled to the ground: the massive Doric columns which had supported the pediment, rolling down the lofty slope upon which the building stood, plunged over the precipice beneath, and, thundering from rock to rock, were shattered into fragments amid the deep echoing gorges below.

Clinging to one another, the Hebrews stood for some moments transfixed and silent, gazing upon the mountain with looks of reverential terror, as if awaiting the catastrophe that was to follow this appalling convulsion of nature. Even the pirates, though better used to such terrific visitations, ceased their labours, and cast their eyes anxiously around them, in the apparent apprehension that another such shock might shake them from the platform, or overwhelm them with uprooted rocks from above. Salvius, however, who had been occupied at the moment in making entries of the different

stores delivered from the caves, pursued his occupation with an imperturbable phlegm, only turning to his men to exclaim, “What is the matter, that you stand thus idle? The explosion is on the other side of the mountain; the wind is from the north; nothing can be blown this way to injure us: pursue your labours, for we have no time to lose.”

After a short delay, the pirates obeyed his orders, all but the mate, who, at the instant of the first alarm, had loudly and repeatedly blown his whistle to summon home his vagrant daughter, and with straining eyes was gazing in every direction in the hope of discovering her. He might not have succeeded, but that his quick ear soon caught her melodious voice, sending forth sweet echoes amid this fearful uproar of the elements; when, following the direction of the sound, he pointed her out, seated upon a projecting crag of lava just below them, and warbling a wild lullaby to the imaginary

giant imprisoned beneath the crater, whose efforts to escape she seemed to consider the sole cause of the explosion, and of the fearful quaking of the whole mountain.

“ Giant huge, Enceladus !
Do not roar and struggle thus ;
Sink to slumber, while I try
To soothe thee with my lullaby,
And the mountain’s cradle deep,
Rocks and coaxes thee to sleep.—
Bow, wow ! Hark ! hark !
How Scylla and Charybdis bark !

“ Do not writhe thy limbs, nor strain
To heave thy shoulders up again ;
Ætna and its minor mountains,
Rocks and forests, fires and fountains,
Are above thee piled ; then cease
Thy vain attempts, and sink to peace.—
Bow, wow ! Hark ! hark !
How Scylla and Charybdis bark !

“ They bay the moon, as if they strove
To tear her from the skies above.

Peace ! or I will call the hounds
To bait thee in thy prison bounds.
Hush, then, hush ! and quiet lie,
While I sing thy lullaby.—
Bow, wow ! Hark ! hark !
How Scylla and Charybdis bark !”

“ El emanu ! God be with us !” ejaculated the Sagan, pressing his daughter in his arms ; when, turning to Salvius, he continued ; “ Pagan ! mean you to make us pass through the fire as an offering to Moloch ? Are we to be tried in the furnace, like the young princes of Judah ? How long are we to remain on this burning rock, which, like the accursed cities, seems to be doomed to the flames, without any Zoar to which the righteous may fly for refuge ?”

“ I hope to be able to remove you to-morrow,” replied the pirate, without raising his eyes from the roll on which he was writing.

“ But we may be swallowed up in the night ; the lava upon which we are to repose may again

be received into the fiery jaws from which it was originally vomited."

"Not, I hope, until we have moved all our stores. There is no danger. I myself mean to pass the night in the Goat's Cave. Put up your prayers to Mercury or Vulcan, as I shall, and you may sleep with a safe conscience."

"A curse upon the Mamzer's false Gods!" ejaculated the Sagan in Hebrew; "am I one to fall down before the calves of Dan and Bethel, when the fire is bursting and the trumpet of the Lord is shouting from this terrible mountain, as if from another Sinai.—I speak for my dear child," he continued in Latin, "rather than for myself. If you would allow me to accompany her to some place of security upon the coast, or on board your galley, we would await your future orders." The pirate at length lifted up his eyes, stared at the Sagan, as if doubtful whether this proposition originated in simplicity or cunning; and then turning upon his heel,

proceeded to give orders to his men about the removal of the stores.

The noises of the mountain had now ceased, the lofty black column of smoke was partially dispersed, and whatever devastations might have been committed on the opposite side, the ravages within observation from the Goat's Cave seemed to have been limited to the final destruction of the Temple of Vulcan. All the pirates having descended the precipice, to assist in the transport of the packages, the platform was abandoned to the Hebrews, who, after having gazed for some time longer upon the smoking crater, returned into the outer cavern, deeply affected by the terrifying phenomenon they had witnessed. "Man's foundation is in the dust," said the Sagan, "and he is crushed before the moth; but the seed of Abraham have no cause to fear this element of fire, however terrible it may be to the worshippers of Moloch. From a burning bush did the Deity himself

deliver our holy law ; by a pillar of fire did he guide the Israelites through the wilderness ; and in a chariot of the same element was the prophet Elijah rapt up into heaven. Let us beseech the God of our fathers, that the flames which are, perhaps, at this moment smouldering beneath us, may in like manner prove a blessing and a beacon to ourselves, although the cities of the idolaters may thereby be made as Admah, and set as Zeboim.”

“ Amen, Selah !” cried Simon, whose tongue had been for some time locked up in amazement and awe. The Sagan pronounced an appropriate prayer, when rising from his knees, and turning to his daughter, he exclaimed, “ We have no pleasant harp or psaltery, my child, none of the six-stringed Shoshannim which you were wont to touch with so much skill ; but your voice needs them not, and if the sweet Song of Barak and Deborah dwells in your memory, it would comfort me to hear it. Or, methinks, I would ra-

ther you should chant your own version of the story of Hagar and Ishmael ; for we, like them, are wanderers in the burning wilderness, and have not less need of providential succour. Sing then, my dear child, that in this hour of their solemn fear the rocks, instead of shuddering at the blasphemies of yonder wild girl, who insults the Deity, even in the time of his manifested wrath, with the preposterous fables of the benighted heathen, may be soothed by the voice of a daughter of Jerusalem, recalling the past mercies of the God who made them."

Zillah, who had occasionally employed herself in versifying portions of the scriptures, immediately complied with her father's request in a slow chant, whose rich and mellow echoes, in the momentary hush of Nature, floated over the precipices and caverns of *Ætna*, as if an angel of peace had sent forth its voice to allay the stormy elements.

“ Beersheba ! thy wilderness, haggard and bare,
 Lay red in the sunbeam’s meridian glow,
 No object to break the monotonous glare
 Of the fierce sky above, and the Desert below,—

When Hagar, bewilder’d, heart-stricken, and faint,
 With faltering footsteps thy solitudes paced,
 Appall’d by her Ishmael’s famishing plaint,
 No drop in her cruise, and no well in the waste.—

She turn’d up to Heaven her agonized eye
 In a silent appeal,—but no succour was sent,
 While her child gave a feeble and death-struggling cry,
 And the heart of its mother with anguish was rent.

‘ Dear victim !’ she murmur’d, ‘ ill-fated, unblest !
 Those features convulsed, I can gaze on no more ;
 On the scantling of turf by this shrub shalt thou rest,
 Till thou yieldest thy breath, and thy sorrows are o’er.’

At the length of a bowshot she sunk on the sands,
 Relieved from the sound of her Ishmael’s moan ;
 But she saw him outstretch his petitioning hands,
 And hid, with a shudder, her face in her own :

Aloud, unrestrain’d, she despairingly wept,
 When the Lord sent his soul-thrilling voice from the
 sky,
 On the wings of the awe-stricken desert it swept,
 ‘ Be comforted, Hagar, thy son shall not die !’

She gazes around her, unseal'd are her eyes,
And lo ! at her feet is a fountain display'd,
Her cruise is replenish'd, and wildly she flies
To the spot where her perishing son had been laid.

His features are wrapt in the paleness of death,
He struggles no more, life is flitting apace,—
But he quaffs from the chalice—she feels his warm
breath,
He has open'd his eyes—he has smiled in her face !

Her heart thrills within her—unable to speak, . . .
She utters a scream of hysterical joy,
With wild agitation, first kisses each cheek,
Then falls on her knees by the side of her boy,
And stretching her tremulous hands to the skies,
While tear-drops outgushing fall fast on the sod,
Her voice comes at length, and she gaspingly cries,
'I thank thee ! I thank thee ! I thank thee, O God ! ' "

" It is well, my child," said the Sagan, when
she had concluded ; " thy words are as honey-
comb, sweet to the soul ; and I may truly say
unto thee, as Boaz exclaimed to Ruth, ' Bless-
ed be thou of the Lord, my daughter ! ' "

As evening approached, the black column of

smoke again upreared itself in terrible majesty from the mouth of the crater, surrounded by rolling volumes of a paler hue ; while the eagles, springing from their rocky eyries, flew screaming off, and the wild goats, foxes, and beasts of chase, were seen plunging and scudding down the sides of the mountain towards the lower grounds ; sure prognostics, according to the mate, who had long been a dweller in this volcanic region, that some new convulsion was to be apprehended. The Hebrews would gladly have effected their retreat before its occurrence, but Salvius made no other reply to the urgent instances of Gabriel, than to repeat that he should himself pass the night in the Goat's Cave, from which he hoped to remove all his remaining stores on the following morning, when his prisoners would be transferred on shipboard, and take their immediate departure from the island. After sunset the column of smoke, gradually reddening, at length assumed

a fiery glow, heaving itself higher and higher in the increasing darkness, its flames apparently struggling to reach the pale and ghastly crescent of the moon which hung above them. Occasionally the lightning leaped out of the mass and shot upwards, as if the angry mountain were hurling back at heaven its own thunderbolts; but there were no fresh explosions, no trembling of the earth, and the Hebrews, after having gazed upon this terrible spectacle until a late hour, betook themselves to their customary prayers, and retired to bed.

For Zillah, however, there was but little repose; frightful dreams, occasioned by the terrible phenomena she had witnessed, disturbed her rest: sometimes, she was startled by flashes of ominous and glary light irradiating the whole interior of the cavern, and towards the morning she was alarmed by a deep groaning and rumbling of the rock, as if it were in the throes of some new eruption. It passed away,

however, and she heard nothing farther but the howling and whistling of the wind, which had arisen in the night, and was furiously battling amid the crags and caverns of the mountain. With the first rays of the sun she gladly sprang from her leafy bed; nor was the Sagan less willing than herself to go forth, and welcome the morning which was to witness their deliverance from this perilous situation. The scene presented to their view from the terrace, offered a singular contrast to the appearances of the previous day. The whole face of Nature was convulsed, distorted into a smile and a frown that might have puzzled the spectator to pronounce which was the most terrible. A furious wind from the north-east, bending the creaking trees till some of them split asunder, and churning the ocean into foam, had not only chased away every cloud from the sky in that direction, but had imparted such a pellucid, glassy transparency to the atmosphere, that the coasts and

distant mountains of Italy stood as sharply out in the bright sunshine, as if they were immediately contiguous to Sicily. The same violent wind, after whirling round and round the column of smoke from the crater, and disclosing by their fiery hue the burning substances with which it was charged, plunged the murky mass down upon the southern part of the island; repeating this operation as fresh volumes of smoke were continually thrown up, until the pall thus spread over the whole land, on the sheltered side of the volcano, becoming too dense for the sun to penetrate, involved that portion of the scenery in a total eclipse, rendered still more conspicuous by the brightness of the opposite hemisphere. As the black canopy, which thus hung over the southern district, was occasionally streaked with red, the mate expressed his opinion that the inhabitants were probably visited with a shower of burning ashes or red hot stones; adding, that it was

lucky the Goat's Cave was nearly emptied of its contents, since a change of wind might quickly subject themselves to the same calamity.

All hands continued busily at work ; Salvius superintending their labours, and making entries of every package, with the same business-like precision, and phlegmatic indifference to the menacing appearances of nature, which he had previously exhibited. The stores and arms being at length all conveyed to the coast, he informed his Hebrew prisoners that they were to quit their rocky prison, and accompany him to the beach : an intimation which they prepared to obey with the greater alacrity, as the mountain again began to bellow with distant explosions, though not producing any such formidable concussion as that by which they had been first startled.

Their descent was necessarily effected with slowness and great caution, for the wind at times threatened to blow them over the pre-

cipices, along the edge of which they were obliged to win their way; while, in other parts, they encountered impediments from prostrate trees, overthrown by the shaking of the ground, or blown down by the tempest. At one point they stopped to contemplate a scene which harrowed their bosoms with compassion, at the same time that it inspired them with a profound and solemn fear. The dark shroud that enveloped the southern part of the island being partially blown away by a furious gust of wind, and the sunbeams plunging into the opening thus made, they were enabled to perceive that the inhabitants, as the mate anticipated, had been visited with a terrible fall of cinders or stones, the former of which had, in some parts, completely blackened the ground. Men, horses, and cattle, either killed by this fearful shower, or suffocated by sulphureous exhalations, were in various directions lying dead in the fields;—of the survivors, some were

rushing to the coast to seek refuge on board ship, speeding along in vehicles of all sorts, or spurting their terrified steeds across the plain ;— peasants were furiously driving their herds and flocks in various directions ;—others, having fastened a pillow or cushion to their head, to protect them from the falling substances, were running wildly towards the temples of their Gods ;—all was hurry, consternation, and wild dismay, presenting a combination of horrors so appalling, that our Hebrews felt their throbbing hearts relieved, when another vast volume of smoke, descending slowly over the scene, like a black curtain, shut out from their view the remainder of this frightful tragedy.

Not without difficulty, and various alarms arising from the violence of the tempest, did they wind their way down the precipitous ravines and savage gorges of the mountain, until, as they skirted round the base of a projecting rock, and came upon a new view of the sea be-

neath them, they beheld an embayed vessel tossed by the storm, which she seemed utterly unable to resist, and driving rapidly towards the rocks. Her sails were furled, and she had a signal of distress flying, but no mariners would have ventured out to her assistance, even could their boat have been launched through the surges, though a number of pilots and sailors were collected on the shore to watch for the catastrophe, of which they all anticipated the approach. The pirate had not testified the smallest interest in the sufferings of the Sicilians, when the blazing entrails of the mountain had been falling around them, and had even desired the Hebrews to hasten forward, since his purposes would not brook delay; yet he felt so much sympathy with these beleaguered sailors, threatened with a calamity to which he himself might one day be exposed, that he sate down beneath an immense chesnut-tree, fixing his eyes upon their labouring vessel with a

manifest anxiety, as if considering whether any thing could be done to succour her. Had he been boarding her at midnight, in the hope of making her his prize, he would have massacred the whole crew without a single “ compunctionous visiting of nature ;” but that she should become the prey of the sea, the common enemy of all navigators, filled him with a regret for the loss of the cargo, which bore the semblance of compassion for the sailors on board. “ Poor fellows !” he at length ejaculated, “ they must be lost ;—her rudder is gone, and she has doubtless parted from all her anchors.” From the commanding eminence on which they stood, and the singular lucidness of the atmosphere in this direction, the Sagan and his companions could perfectly distinguish every movement of the crew, who seemed to foresee the fate that awaited them ; some having climbed up into the rigging, while others

were embracing and supplicating the figure of the patron Deity enshrined upon the deck.

“Alas!” exclaimed Zillah, “can nothing be done for this unfortunate vessel? Will all be lost?”

“Part of the cargo may be washed ashore,” replied the pirate, “but it will become the prize of the fishermen and pilots, with whom we never interfere.”

“But the sailors—the wretched crew? I spoke of them.”

“Unless they clear the rocks, upon which they will, however, probably be dashed in less than ten minutes, all must inevitably perish!” Notwithstanding the harrowing nature of this statement, the spectators continued gazing upon the labouring bark in a transfixed and mute agony of suspense.

There is a species of fascination in all sights of horror which renders it impossible to avert

the eyes from a coming catastrophe, even although we know that its occurrence will lacerate the feelings, and wring the compassionate heart to its very core. Such was the inexplicable influence that riveted the looks of the Hebrews upon the apparently doomed vessel, in expectation of its momentary destruction, when the pirate, whose practised eye was keener and more piercing than theirs, exclaimed—"I see a horse upon the deck, and lo ! a man mounts upon his back. Ha ! he leaps into the foaming waves ! By Mercury ! it is gallantly done. Better to try this chance, forlorn as it is, than be dashed to pieces upon the rocks."

At the same moment, Zillah, who had recognized the figure, as well as the beautiful black Arabian horse, uttered a cry, and ejaculated, as she clasped her father by the arm, "Amazement ! it is Esau ! the mysterious

Esau, whom I so lately saw by moonlight in the garden at Rome!"

"Verily, Rab Malachi, it was even he, the stranger with the ruby ring! He will be saved! he will be saved!" cried Gabriel, snapping his fingers. "Let us hurry down to the beach—he shall escape us no longer—I will beseech, command, compel him to let me have one glance, at least one single peep, at the jewel of jewels!"

"He cannot be drowned," observed Simon, "if it be the miraculous ring of Solomon, whose tomb, as we all know, was broken open and plundered by the sacrilegious—"—"Booshoh he!" interposed the Sagan: "hold thy peace, Levite! Think not of Solomon's ring, but rather of his words, when he saith, 'A prudent man dealeth with knowledge; but a fool layeth open his folly.'"

Every eye in the mean time was fixed upon the daring horseman. Zillah was almost breath-

less with terrible anxiety, nor could she suppress an occasional shudder when he became invisible for several moments, and she imagined him to be whelmed beneath the high-rolling billows. Anon, he emerged from amid the foam of the battling waters, and was seen aiding and encouraging the noble animal he bestrode, which, however, so far from exhibiting any signs of distress, seemed itself to be triumphantly riding upon the waves, as if they were its native element. Thus alternately lost and seen, now plunging into the watery valley, and again conspicuous amid the foam, upon the summit of some lofty surge, the horse and his rider gradually won their fearful way towards the shore, until the overhanging projection upon which the Hebrews stood no longer allowed them to behold their struggles.

“ He is safe now,” said the pirate; “ in another minute he will be in shallow water, and upon a sandy bottom. While you have been

gazing at this daring horseman, I have been watching the vessel. She had not lost her anchors, as I suspected, but had been dragging them, and I see by her rolling that they have now brought her up, and she rides for the present in safety. It was high time, for in a few minutes more the rocks would have shattered her to pieces, and the bay would have been covered with her timbers."

"Then no lives will be lost!" exclaimed Zillah, with sparkling eyes.

"No, lady; nor will there be any booty for the fishermen and pilots, whom you see gaping out for it down below."

"Hallelujah!" ejaculated Zillah, clasping her hands together; "the Lord's name be praised!"

"We must continue our descent," said Salvius, who no longer felt any interest in the scene, now that the vessel was apparently rescued from the doom that threatened her; and

Zillah was not sorry to comply with his wishes, in the hope that, as they approached the shore, they might encounter Esau, the marvel of whose appearance at such an unexpected moment, and in so terrifying a manner, absorbed all her thoughts, notwithstanding the horrors she had lately witnessed, and the natural prodigies by which she was still encompassed. "Who shall explain to us, my dear father," she exclaimed to the Sagan, "the motives and the movements of this mysterious stranger? Why does he thus haunt our footsteps? How could he discover our secret course, captured as we were in the night-time, and since confined upon this inaccessible rock; and why, although he thus tracks us through fire and water, at the peril of his life, as he promised when he first serenaded me in Palestine, does he never court any closer intimacy, or even avow his purposes, friendly as they unquestionably seem to be?"

"Away with such amity, my child; for there

is little good in the heart where there is so much mystery in the actions. I am no expounder of these riddles, these ambushes, these ambiguous serenades ; but the proverb tells me, that an open rebuke is better than secret love ; and I have little faith in the good intentions of one who prowls around us like a young lion lurking in secret places for his prey. Let the seers and the monthly prognosticators expound enigmas, but for myself, I suspect the man who speaks as Johanan did to Gedaliah in Mizpah, even though his warnings be the words of truth."

" Such have his been to me," whispered Zillah to herself ; " nor can I believe them to have sprung from any other than a friendly source. And yet I am little entitled to his good offices ; he has confessed himself to be a man of vengeance and blood ; he has darkly alluded to a sacrificed mistress and a murdered rival. How am I to interpret so contradictory a character,

and such inexplicable conduct? Gladly would I have speech of him, that if he follows me to announce fresh perils and persecution, I might prepare myself the better to endure them."

Most gladly, too, would Gabriel have caught a glimpse of him, for he was actually upon the tenterhooks of expectation in the hope of obtaining a sight of the ring. For this purpose, he peered sharply around him as they wound down the base of the mountain, and approached the spot where he must have swam ashore, when, not seeing the smallest trace of the object he was seeking, he demanded permission of Salyius to quit the escort for a short time, that he might enquire of the fishermen upon the beach what had become of the strange seahorseman. The pirate stared at him for a moment, and then, with a stern look, pointed the way forward, at the same time making signals to his men, who closed around the Hebrews, and presently turning away from the shore, led them

into a wild and unfrequented spot, not far from the creek where they had first landed, and at the head of which they now saw the galley moored to the shore. “ Surely, you are not going to embark us, and put forth to sea in the face of this frightful tempest !” exclaimed the Sagan.

Grave and phlegmatic as he usually was, the pirate could not forbear a derisive smile, as he replied, “ To sea with such a wind as this ! we are daring, but neither desperate nor mad !” And he again marched forward in silence, to the no small annoyance of the wearied Sagan, whose tender feet little qualified him for such arduous toils, until they reached a solid, barn-like building, in a lone deep glen, where the prisoners were informed that they were to pass the night, and remain until the weather allowed them to sail from the island. The structure was used as a storehouse for such heavier goods as could not be conveniently transported to the Goat’s Cave, and offered hardly a single accom-

modation as a place of lodging. The friendly mate, however, whose kind services and attentions they had already experienced, exerted himself to prepare a little room for Zillah's reception; and from him she first learned that the ship in which they sailed from the Tiber, having been brought round to the eastern side of the island, was to convey them away from Sicily, as soon as the wind changed; though Salvius had not revealed to any one for what port, or even for what country, they were to sail. "I myself," added the mate, "have requested to be left behind. Since my poor Helen has lost her wits, she considers the mountain as her father rather than myself; she loves its rocks and forests, its crags and gorges, and even its smoking craters, better than she does me, or any thing else in the world; and somehow or other my affection for her seems to have increased as hers for me has diminished. It would break her heart to take her away, it would break mine to leave

her,* so here we shall live and die together. Salvius has given me the flock of goats, some of which I shall sell, and buy a little hovel and garden lower down the mountain; for this climbing up and down does not suit a lame man: so that with my garden, my goats, and my Helen, I hope to pass the rest of my days in peace. Jupiter knows, that ~~we~~ we hitherto has been warlike and stormy enough!"

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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